

# macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH



***This Month  
Great  
Gift Ideas!***

Cocktail  
Ottercase  
iFrogz Head phones



***New Column -  
"The Greening Continues"***

**\$1.00US**

Volume 8  
Issue 2

## *Masthead*

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# Columns

<b>Letter from the CEO</b> .....	6
Happy 25 <sup>th</sup> , Mac!.....	6
<b>According to Hoyle</b> .....	8
Apple in the Post-Steve Jobs Era .....	8
<b>Dan's Scans</b> .....	13
Who Can You Trust? .....	13
<b>Grandchild's Guide to Using Grandpa's Computer</b> .....	16
<b>Ivory Tower February 2009</b> .....	21
<b>MacMod 3.0</b> .....	26
<b>Doc_Babad's Macintosh Tips – A Macintosh Tip or Three...</b> .....	29
<b>The Northern Spy</b> .....	41
Hinges of History and a Tale of Two CEOs .....	41
<b>Safe, Secure and Polite Macin' — Things You Should Practice</b> .....	48
How to Completely Erase the Hard Disk — Tips to Avoid Data Theft When Donating a Computer System {Even to your kids} .....	48
<b>Rants, Raves and Revelations – February</b> .....	56
Customer Service: A Study In Contrasts {SmileOnMyMac's Browseback and Roxio's Toast} .....	56

# Books

<b>Amazon macCompanion Store</b> .....	66
<b>Adobe Creative Suite 3 Bible</b> .....	67
<b>Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies</b> .....	70
<b>A Digital Photographer's Guide to Model Releases: Making the Best Business Decisions with Your Photos of People, Places and Things</b> .....	73
<b>MediaWiki: Wikipedia and Beyond</b> .....	76
<b>Photoshop CS4 for Dummies</b> .....	79

# Greenware

.....	81
<i>The Greening Continues — The most eclectic of what we read.</i> .....	81
<i>Project Blue Beam Technologies and "False Christs"</i> .....	86
<i>The Law of Unintended Consequences – CFLs and Wind Turbines</i> .....	92

## Hardware

.....	95
<i>Plugz Earpollution Earplugs</i> .....	95
<i>Throwbox Earpollution Headphones</i> .....	97
<i>iFrogz Toxix Earpollution</i> .....	99
<i>OtterBox Defender for iPod touch 2nd generation Defender Series™</i> .....	107

## Software

.....	110
<i>Cocktail 4.2.2 Maintenance Utility</i> .....	110
<i>Advertisers Index</i> .....	117
<i>A Better Handyman and Contractor Service</i> .....	117
<i>Apple Corporation</i> .....	117
<i>Amazon.com - macCompanion Store</i> .....	117
<i>AprèsVin</i> .....	117
<i>Century Roofing</i> .....	117
<i>Concert or the Living Waters Live H20</i> .....	117
<i>Evo Networks</i> .....	117
<i>H20 Hybrid Pro</i> .....	117
<i>OxySilver</i> .....	117
<i>PESWiki</i> .....	117
<i>3-Rivers Synergy Centre</i> .....	117
<i>Tropical Software</i> .....	117
<i>Advertising Information</i> .....	128

# Columns



## Letter from the CEO

### Happy 25<sup>th</sup>, Mac!

By Robert Pritchett

*macCompanion* was not a magazine quite back then, but we started out as MacNut (way back when) and we have delighted in the progress we have seen as Apple has evolved and morphed the Mac during the last 25 years.

Happy Birthday! And may you have many more.

For a timeline, history etc. of the Mac see -

<http://www.macworld.com/article/138340/mac25anniversary.html?lsrc=mweek>

<http://schwarztech.us/articles/macat25-storie>

<http://www.applegazette.com/dotmac/the-web-celebrates-25-years-of-macintosh/>



And don't forget Fortune from January 30, 2009 -

""If a picture is worth a thousand words, here's five grand worth of Apple (AAPL) news in charts and lists released over the past couple of days," Phillip Elmer-Dewitt reports for Fortune.

Elmer-Dewitt covers:

1. Web Brands. Apple scored No. 10 in Nielson Online's ranking of the top Web brands based on the number of unique visitors each site drew in December 2008.
2. Social Brands. The iPhone scored No. 1 — ahead even of its parent company at No. 3 — in the Virtue 100, a new ranking of blue chip brands by how often they get mentioned in blogs, photo-sharing sites and such social media entities.
3. Days to 1 Million. The rate at which the leading smartphones achieved the market penetration milestone of 1 million units. Apple's iPhone 3G crushed all comers.
4. Volume vs. Revenue. CounterNotions's Kontra shows that what matters is not how many smartphones you sell, but how much you make on each sale.
5. Stock Price. Finally, a glance at Apple's share price, which having suffered a thousand cuts in the past year finally picked up a little traction in the past two weeks."

<http://apple20.blogs.fortune.cnn.com/2009/01/30/five-easy-apple-charts/>

This month, Harry Babad has begun a couple of columns, this time on "Greening" and its relationship to the Macintosh culture and also, "Safe, Secure and Polite Macin' — Things You Should Practice". Harry is the "comeback kid" after some bouts with cancer and has recovered. Welcome back!

Ensure we have 25 more prosperous years by keeping us going by visiting our advertisers, affiliates and sending some coin our direction via PayPal.

Sincerely, your macCompanion

Robert L. Pritchett



## *According to Hoyle...*

### Apple in the Post-Steve Jobs Era

February 2009

by Jonathan Hoyle

[jhoyle@maccompanion.com](mailto:jhoyle@maccompanion.com)

<http://www.jonhoyle.com>

The economy is down. We have the lowest unemployment since 1992, sales are steeply declined, and companies, even very successful ones, are laying off in record numbers. Some say that this is the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Whether you buy into such statements or not, most believe that things are going to get worse before they get better. Perhaps much worse.

And yet, Apple posts record revenues and profits for Q1 2009.

It seems very difficult to get a handle on what Apple will do next. Throughout the 1990's, all the major prognosticators were predicting Apple going out business "in five years". It was always five years away, whether the claim was in 1990, 1995 or 2000. Even as late as 2002, one columnist predicted that Apple will voluntarily exit the computer business by 2008 <http://www.macobserver.com/appledeathknell/index.shtml> Yeah, so much for the genius of us columnists.

Not that the Pro-Mac fan-base fared with any better. With each new product release, some blogger somewhere speaks of Microsoft now being "doomed" and that Apple will take over the market, again "within five years". Although Macintosh marketshare has recently spiked (one in every five portables sold today is a MacBook), overall share still remains shy of 10% (lower than it was ten years ago during the Mac clone era of the late 1990's). Hardly a take-over. Sure Microsoft no longer holds 90+% of the market as it used to, but it is still the dominant OS. And it appears very unlikely that that will change in as short a period as five years.

And as if Apple weren't unpredictable enough as it is, we now have Steve Jobs taking a leave of absence for health reasons. And what if he doesn't come back for a while? Or



ever, if the unthinkable were to happen? As we are all mortal, this is something that must be considered. Can anyone forecast what would become of Apple under such an eventuality? This (hopefully) hypothetical is the subject of this month's discussion.

So what makes me think I can do a better job at foreseeing what is going to happen than others who have miserably failed at it? Actually, I doubt I can do any better. I estimate that my predictions about Apple has an accuracy rate of about 40%. Not a great batting average, I admit. However, I know what I will NOT do: apply conventional wisdom and standard business expectations to Apple's current situation to forecast their future. People who do this have always been wrong about Apple. (Which is why Apple never went out of business in any of those five-year periods.) I instead will apply my knowledge of the company history, customer base, and just plain gut feel. (Hey, how much less accurate can that be than from what these other talking head geniuses come up with?)

### **The Steve Jobs Effect**

Before predicting the effect the absence of Jobs will have on Apple, we should first consider how his presence affected it. Some people are quick to overestimate it, even coming out and saying Jobs is Apple itself. Essentially: The Fall of Steve Jobs = The Fall of Apple. Although I would agree that Steve's influence has been quite profound, it should be remembered that in the 25-year history of the Macintosh, Steve Jobs was involved in only half of it. Macintosh fanatics abounded throughout the John Sculley, Michael Spindler and Gil Amelio eras, and most certainly will continue to do so after Steve leaves. Moreover, Mac OS marketshare reached its highest level during the period when Steve was still at NeXT, and reached its lowest (~3%) while Steve was in charge.

Having said all this, there is little doubt that Steve Jobs was instrumental in turning Apple around from near-death to the booming business it is today. The master marketer, Steve was able to create interest and spin a business plan like nobody's...uh, well, business. Could Apple have created the iPod and the iPhone in the same way under anyone else? Could anyone else make them such household names? Pretty darn unlikely.

So, Wall Street sees Steve Jobs as essentially equal to Apple. When it was announced that he was taking a leave of absence, Apple stock plummeted. Never mind the fact that its business remained solid, as evidenced by the record numbers in an otherwise terrible economy. Never mind that Apple remains the toast of the town in the tech world. No, what matters is: "What's happening to Steve?"

After all, Jobs brought genius and unpredictability to the show. Steve took gambles, and won more often than he lost. His gambles changed the face of entire markets (including portable music players and cell phones). And OS X finally made the Mac the clear winner in OS market.

So **Prediction #1:** Even with the same numbers and the same profitably, Apple stock price will be significantly lower without Steve Jobs than under the same scenario with him, as Wall Street's expectations will be lower.

## Respect

For the longest time, Apple never got any respect. I remember about 10-15 years ago, my Windows friends would constantly call my Macintosh a "toy", whilst their Windows boxes were "serious machines" (despite the fact their OS was simply a wholesale rip-off from the Mac). I think this lack of respect also played into the belief that Apple was going out of business in five years attitude. Whenever I'd hear that suggested, I would remind my friends, "You said the same thing five years ago, and five years before that, yet Apple is still in business". My friends just laughed and said, "Well, I'll probably say it again five years from now."

Notice that no one is saying it now.

Competitors take Apple very seriously today. Even a behemoth like Microsoft targeted Apple when it launched its ill-advised \$300 Million Gates/Seinfeld ad campaign, as a response to Apple's Mac/PC ads. These Microsoft ads were so poorly received that they were replaced by the current "I'm a PC" ad, again to combat Apple. These ads were much better and could have actually improved things for Microsoft, if it weren't for someone leaking the fact that Macs were used in creating these Microsoft ads [http://www.macuser.com/news/ouch\\_microsoft\\_im\\_a\\_pc\\_ads\\_cre.php](http://www.macuser.com/news/ouch_microsoft_im_a_pc_ads_cre.php) But I digress...

With Steve gone, will Apple go back to being the Rodney Dangerfield of tech companies? I don't think so. If nothing else, the iPod and iPhone have made Apple a very powerful mover in the business world, and those products are here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future. No matter who is Captain of the ship, Apple will get its respect.

**Prediction #2:** Even with Steve gone, pundits will still admit that Apple will still be around five years hence.

## The Customer Base

Apple's customer base is very loyal. Always has been. Mac users in particular are known for their zealous, near religious, fervor. And it should be remembered that the customer is not just due to Steve Jobs, as Mac-o-philes have been this way for decades. But there remains no question that Steve Jobs has won over the Mac user base. Despite this though, there have been times in which Macintosh community has seen Steve misstep, causing Steve to change direction.

Heretical sounding? Well, true none-the-less. Consider some of Steve's less brilliant decisions:

1. The Round (Hockey-Puck) Mouse. Yeah, remember that one? That pretty boneheaded move took place not long after Steve Jobs returned to Apple. Any simple user study would have disabused him of any delusions regarding this product prior to releasing it. It took Steve three (friggin!) years to reverse this decision, and only thanks to the users (voting with their dollars to buy other vendors' mouse products) to force his hand.
2. Rhapsody. At the 1997 Apple Worldwide Developer Conference, Steve Jobs attempted to kill the Mac OS and replace it with the NeXTStep operating system (called Rhapsody).  
All Mac developers would have to rewrite everything from scratch. A huge developer revolt took place, forcing Apple to switch gears and instead create a new operating system: Mac OS X, which combined the best of the Mac OS, NeXTStep and other new innovations.
3. The G4 Cube. This little painful item was overpriced, incorrectly marketed and had no real user base. It was display-less and non-upgradeable, a combination that didn't appeal to the high end user it was targeting. Cancelled and quickly forgotten, it was replaced by the far more successful Mac mini.

What is my point with regard to these three examples? It's not that Steve Jobs isn't brilliant (because he most certainly is). It's that the Mac customer base is extremely strong and loyal, and a mistake by any CEO (even the great Steve Jobs) will result in a very loud response. Hey man, we Mac fanatics are not afraid to express our opinions. The above three failed products are proof of that. We are not simply sheep following blindly (as many PC pundits like to suggest); stupid decisions will cause user reactions, regardless of who is CEO.

**Prediction #3:** The next CEO will be carefully scrutinized with each product announcement. Stupidity will have its consequences. The high expectations people have had with Steve Jobs is likely to make any mediocre rollout appear disappointing in the eyes of Apple devotees. Advice to new CEO: It's going to be tough out there. Better wear a cup.

## **The Macintosh**

I don't care what anyone says, Apple's most important product will always be the Macintosh. Yes, I know iPods outsell Macs by an order of magnitude (they should, they're an order of magnitude cheaper). And iPhone contracts are a huge revenue source. But in the end, it is development in Mac OS X which drives the technologies of everything else Apple has.

So what impact would the departure of Steve Jobs mean for the Mac? In my opinion, not as much as you might think since Steve has been "gone" from the Mac for the past 2-3 years now. Since the beginning of the iPhone's early development, Jobs had pretty much delegated Mac development efforts to others. One merely has to compare the last few WWDC and MacWorld keynotes with previous ones to see what I mean. The highly controlling Steve Jobs had always been on top of everything to do with Mac technology.

Every keynote demo was timed for effect and just the right words were used for marketing. Even as late as 2005, his last minute decision to leave IBM's G5 processor behind and switch the Mac architecture to Intel was masterfully marketed. Compare that to WWDC 07's keynote, in which he followed notes written out for him in his Mac demos, and WWDC 08's keynote, in which he skipped the Mac completely.

Sure the very high-end movements have to be cleared by him, but he appears to be happy letting Bertrand Serlet and Scott Forstall make the day-to-day decisions. Unless the next guy is also a micro-manager, I believe that things will continue in the same manner.

And what will that course be? One important aspect I believe has to do with its MacBook line. Although overall Mac sales climbed this past quarter, Mac desktops fell a whopping 20%! It was fortunately made up for by a staggering 30% increase in portable sales.

As time goes on, I believe this trend will continue, and MacBooks will soon become Apple's most important product. Gone will be the days that Apple can simply just pour more power into their tower machines. They will need to keep their portables very fast and very light.

**Prediction #4:** Mac OS X, without Steve Jobs, will emphasize performance improvements over glitz and keep one step ahead of Windows. I am sure there are still a number of really cool new features started under Steve, which have yet to make it out of the pipeline and into our hands yet, but an emphasis in cleaning up the features that already exist will be as big.

## **Conclusion**

Apple without Steve Jobs is almost impossible to imagine. He has single-handedly brought Apple back from life-support and placed it ahead of the pack in technological wizardry. Added to that Microsoft's blundering of Vista, Apple is actually sitting pretty well right now. Desperate times had called for Jobs to perform desperate measures, but the times are no longer so desperate (at least not for Apple). Steve has done a magnificent job, and his successor should hopefully be ready for the transition.

**Final Prediction:** Apple without Steve Jobs will be more about evolution than revolution. That's not to say there won't be new insanely great products. But the volatility of such dramatic changes for Apple will probably cool for a while. And although the fun of revolutions may be missed, maybe a little while of evolution will be a good thing after all.

Coming Up Next Month: More development topics. See you in 30!

To see a list of all the According to Hoyle columns, visit:

<http://www.jonhoyle.com/maccompanion>

# Dan's Scans

## Scanning the Mac for Fun and Profit



### *Dan's Scans*

#### Who Can You Trust?

By Dan Robinson

Well, you can trust me, of course. But other than thee and me?

Disturbing news from one of my favorite/least favorite companies -- Belkin.

Belkin had always been on my good list. As a Mac consultant, I always felt I could recommend their products. I've never had a Belkin USB hub that wasn't the best of the bunch.

Until several years ago. When I wanted to attach my iPod to an in-car FM transmitter. I went to CompUSA and bought the Belkin. It was so weak, the signal wouldn't reach three feet to the car's antenna. Returned the same day.

Later, my Linksys 802.11g wireless router died after long and faithful service. I plunked down around \$130 plus tax for the Belkin N1 Wireless Router (F5D8231-4). At the time, the latest and greatest (TL&G) -- also about \$50 cheaper than the Airport Extreme.

The signal was flaky, weak, and networked Ethernet printers were not visible to wireless devices. After hours and hours with the help desk, Belkin sent me a replacement and it not only wouldn't read the config file created by the original (necessitating manual configuration which meant *Config one thing -- update -- wait for reset -- config next thing -- repeat.*) When I got it configured, it did exactly the same thing as the original. Maybe it was the latest but it sure wasn't great. It also went back for a refund and, for more money, I bought an Airport Extreme which has worked flawlessly ever since.

The Belkin Sport Arm Band for the iPhone holds your iPhone on your arm while you run around with no pockets. I mean seriously, now! Sure -- they work; but just how much can you say about them when there are dozens of products that also work. Oh yeah! The armband has a tastefully-designed key holder for people who *really* have no pockets! Give it an extra star for the keyholder? But wait! Let's knock off a star for the fact that the minimum bicep diameter is nine inches. How many joggers do you know with a bicep size of ten inches or less? I'm 5'10", Body Fat: 12.5%, Bicep: 10.5" -- so if I were to wear this product, I would be pulling it up every 20 paces or so. How many smaller people bought this product just to throw it in the closet after a mile or so?

Even now, several years later, the trend toward flawed products continues. The [Belkin Switch-to-Mac Cable](#) cost me more in time and credibility with a client than the product cost. It flat didn't work and gave me no clues as to *why* it didn't work. This was a review product, too!

## **That was the Sad Part**

## **Here's the Disturbing Part**

Arlen Parsa over at The Daily Background reported (with screenshots) and later followed up that Michael Bayard, business development representative at Belkin, paid 65 cents a pop for positive reviews on Amazon.com. This is a huge scandal! A Google search for ["*mike bayard*" *belkin*] got 671 results (including Spanish, Polish, Italian, Thai, Greek and Russian), This is like the Apple "I'm a Mac" commercial where John Hodgeman divvies up stacks of money, then decides to move it all to advertising rather than 'fixing' Vista.

Very funny.

Ha Ha.

But it isn't! Not when Belkin actually proves some companies feel that way in spite of apologies and protestations to the contrary from Belkin president, Mark Reynoso.

They just don't get it! We're talking about tons of ill will toward a name brand! Apple is making money hand over fist (See news report) because of a philosophy of "It Just

Works." They're pulling droves of customers to their products in a less than stellar economy. Even if there is 10% unemployment, remember, **90% are still working!**

Companies take notice: NEW CUSTOMERS ARE NOT COMING JUST BECAUSE OF ADS -- THEY'RE COMING TO APPLE BECAUSE THEY'RE TIRED OF CRAPPY PRODUCTS THAT DON'T WORK!

If I get three or four bad products in a row from a company, do you think I'm going to recommend that company's stuff to my clients, my readers, my friends?

As a reviewer, I make zero dollars. It's a labor of love. And I would dearly love to be able to fill a column every month about products that work, the first time, as advertised. Like the Belkin Power Jolt. You plug it in and it recharges your iPhone/iPod. It worked! Go buy one!

But that's penny poof! Belkin and other companies, need to put out their main line, high profit, signature products, secure in the knowledge that they don't need hacks like Michael Bayard pay for good reviews of bad product. Increase the budget for beta testing. Have enough engineers on staff who can squash those bugs that beta testers report. Then put out that \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank) to rave reviews from people like me. I even take beta product for the fun of it. I actually enjoy trying out TL&G.

## **So . . . Who Can you Trust?**

Again . . . people like me (he said modestly).

Your key to trustworthy reviews is to get your information from trustworthy sites. Here at MacCompanion is a good place, as is MacWorld, MyMac.com, CNet, and the like. You'll get knowledgeable, honest reviews at these sites.

I recommend Googling search terms like [*reviews printers*] or [*review "airport extreme"*] or [*compare canon elf*], and then reading review sites you know to be on the up-and-up.

## **Who *NOT* to trust!**

Amazon for one. Anyplace where "user reviews" can be found are automatically suspect. All a company hack needs is a half dozen email addresses to give their piece of crap a five-star rating. The reverse is also true. Their six selves can badmouth a competitor's superior product just as easily. So, if you read these reviews, keep a salt shaker handy for many, many grains of salt. "Cum grano salis". And while I'm quoting Latin, "Caveat lector." Let the reader beware!

# Grandchild's Guide to Using Grandpa's Computer

By Gene Ziegler Copyright © 1994 and printed with permission  
[elz1@cornell.edu](mailto:elz1@cornell.edu)  
<http://people.cornell.edu/pages/elz1/clocktower/DrSeuss.html>



## History of the Grandchild's Guide to Using Grandpa's Computer Poem

This poem has probably received more attention and circulation than anything I have ever written. It was created in an hour, late one night in the fall of 1994 after my four-year-old grandson and his older brother had significantly rearranged the resources on my Macintosh.

It was originally a gift to Internet friends and was passed from person to person, and posted on newsgroups and web sites in several countries. It has since been published in NetGuide Magazine, March 95, p86, and in the Seattle Times, Sunday Edition August 13th, 1995, and has generated more than 1000 fan messages. A Web search will usually turn up 100 or more copies posted hither, thither, and yon.



Unfortunately, the Internet being what it is, some scoundrel whose editing skills exceeded his or her ethical standards edited the poem, reduced it by half, removed my name, and recirculated it under the title "If Dr. Seuss were a Technical Writer", attributed to the ever prolific "Anonymous." Dr. Zseuss, the real Dr. Seuss impersonator, responded with Hang the Information Highwayman! in the summer of 95.

<http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/elz1/clocktower/Highwayman.html>

## Hang the Information Highwayman!

by Gene Ziegler, © 1995

When a party writes a poem and he puts it on the net,  
He writes for love not money, and he takes what he can get.  
He writes to bring you pleasure, that's the nature of the game.  
He writes for recognition and he's sure to sign his name.  
I wrote the poem in question, but this will make you laugh, the version  
circulating, is my work cut in half! Someone didn't like it, I guess that's a cinch.  
It passed around the Internet, until it met the Grinch.



I've never met the miscreant who edited my work, but when I close my eyes and try, I can see the jerk! The eyes are tiny pixels, close together you will find, they're only separated by his narrow little mind.

His fingernails are dirty as he types on sticky keys, He lurks around the network and takes whatever he sees. He edits, chops, appropriates, and strips away my name, A scoundrel on the Internet, a lowdown dirty shame.

I'd like to find this filcher, so I'll offer this reward. I'll give away my Mac SE, throw in the power cord. If you will help me track him down and hang his internets This information highwayman deserves what'er he gets.

And if we fail to find him, I'll hit him with a curse. His hard disk will start spinning counter-clockwise in reverse. His screen will start to flicker, and his mouse will chase a hearse. I'll teach that hacking larcenist to tamper with my verse!

If you want to see my uncut work, take heart, it's still alive It's in NetGuide, page eighty-six, for March of ninety-five.

Ten years have past and the fan email and requests to repost just keep coming. Writing programs and teachers' groups around the world often quote the two poems to teach youngsters Internet publishing ethics.

This poem has been set to music twice, once by a rapper and in the second case made into a Gilbert & Sullivan-like opera by a music teacher in Bangkok, who had his students sing it at graduation.

It's been made into a brass plaque and sold in a gift shop in Dallas, recited on an Australian talk show (recently) and for the closing moments of a Vancouver TV show, "Data's Cafe."

In January 2004 Internet columnist Eric Shackle said that; "A search of the Internet shows that despite all that publicity, Ziegler has good reason to feel cranky and forgotten. When we googled his memorable phrase "socket packet pocket" we found about 3410 references. We checked out some of the websites. In nearly every case, the original poem had been cut in half, and posted without the author's name."

### **Grandchild's Guide to Using Grandpa's Computer**

by Gene Ziegler, © 1994

Bits Bytes Chips Clocks. Bits in bytes on chips in box. Bytes with bits and chips with clocks. Chips in box on ether-docks.

Chips with bits come. Chips with bytes come. Chips with bits and bytes and clocks come.

Look, sir. Look, sir. read the book, sir. Let's do tricks with bits and bytes, sir. Let's do tricks with chips and clocks, sir.

First, I'll make a quick trick bit stack. Then I'll make a quick trick byte stack. You can

make a quick trick chip stack. You can make a quick trick clock stack.

And here's a new trick on the scene. Bits in bytes for your machine. Bytes in words to fill  
your screen.

Now we come to ticks and tocks, sir. Try to say this by the clock, sir.

Clocks on chips tick. Clocks on chips tock. Eight byte bits tick. Eight bit bytes tock.  
Clocks on chips with eight bit bytes tick. Chips with clocks and eight byte bits tock.

Here's an easy game to play. Here's an easy thing to say...

If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a port, and the bus is interrupted as a very last  
resort, and the address of the memory makes your floppy disk abort then the socket  
packet pocket has an error to report!

If your cursor finds a menu item followed by a dash, and the double-clicking icon puts  
your window in the trash, and your data is corrupted cause the index doesn't hash, then  
your situation's hopeless, and your system's gunna crash.

You can't say this? What a shame, sir! We'll find you another game, sir.

If the label on the cable on the table at your house says the network is connected to the  
button on your mouse, but your packets want to tunnel on another protocol, that's  
repeatedly rejected by the printer down the hall, and your screen is all distorted by the  
side-effects of gauss, so your icons in the window are as wavy as a souse, then you may  
as well reboot and go out with a bang, cause as sure as I'm a poet, the sucker's gunna  
hang!

When the copy of your floppy's getting sloppy on the disk, and the microcode  
instructions cause unnecessary risc,

then you have to flash your memory and you'll want to RAM your ROM. quickly turn off  
your computer and be sure to tell your mom!

Billbo Baggins wrote on April 15, 2008 –

"If you understand what you've read, this might seem absurd,  
but I really hate to say that you are definitely a nerd."

**See also –**

"Hacker's Disease" ("Simion!") by Gene Ziegler 1984  
<http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/elz1/clocktower/>

Oh, The LINKS you can Link! by Gene Ziegler 1999  
<http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/elz1/clocktower/ohthelinks.html>

"Candidate for a Pullet Surprise" by Jerrold H. Zar, 1994  
[http://www.bdb.co.za/shackle/articles/pullet\\_surprise\\_poets.htm](http://www.bdb.co.za/shackle/articles/pullet_surprise_poets.htm)

"Design Coding" by "The Poetic Prophet"/ "The SEO Rapper" March 20, 2008  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0qMe7Z3EYg>

"Modern SF Novelist" by Jim C. Hines July 17, 2008  
<http://jimhines.livejournal.com/382703.html>



## Ivory Tower February 2009

By Ted Bade

Let start this monthly article with a rant. I am truly (as I expect most Americans are right now) sick of the financial investor aspect of our country. When I was young, I remember one of the nastiest insults one could say was that “that so-and-so would sell his own mother.” Well the financial speculators of this country have proved that they would not only sell their mother, but their grandmother and grandfather, and any member of their or anyone else's family. They brought us inflated oil prices, (great for grandmothers and fathers on a fixed income), they drove their companies into the dirt with their lies and schemes, causing the collapse of many financial institutions world wide (great for mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles getting ready for retirement), then had the gall to beg for help from the very same people whose money they ripped off in the first place. Should I mention that some of them even refused to give up their bonuses? IMHO, bonuses are for when you do something extra good, I don't think driving a company into financial disaster meets that qualification.

I call these people the true terrorists of 2008. May the viruses of a thousand PCs infect your every day, pttttth!!!! (that's my best try at a raspberry,...).

**Apple Quarter one financial information** - Apple ended the month of January by posting their first quarter financial reports. Things look good for Apple. Once again Apple makes the best quarter in their history. To quote their statement:

*“The Company posted record revenue of \$10.17 billion and record net quarterly profit of \$1.61 billion, or \$1.78 per diluted share. These results compare to revenue of \$9.6 billion and net quarterly profit of \$1.58 billion, or \$1.76 per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter. Gross margin was 34.7 percent, equal to the year-ago quarter.”*

These number add up to sales of 2,524,000 Macs (9% growth), a record 22,727,000 iPods (only 3% growth), and 4,363,000 iPhones (88% growth).

Great news for Apple, and their customers. Let us hope this continues into the future.

**Never go partying without it** - I am always amazed at the devices and applications people develop for our electronic computer toys. I just heard about an interesting device called the iBreath, an alcohol testing device that plugs into your iPhone/iPod! This interesting little device plugs into the bottom of your iPod, you set it up and then blow your alcohol laden breath into a little port on the side and within seconds, it will tell you your alcohol level. Pretty cool. However, it doesn't take your keys away from you. ☺

The site has a little video showing how to use the device. While it seems pretty simple to set up, I cannot but help wonder if setup is all that easy when one's alcohol levels are high enough to warrant using it! Never the less, this is a great idea. Perhaps the designated driver can operate it!

**It seems like 2000 all over again** - Leave it to Microsoft to be nine years late for Y2K issues (well, actually, they did have lots of Y2K issues, but I liked the analogy). According to several articles I read, many of Microsoft's Zune digital media players locked up when at the end of the year, when the date changed from December 31, 2008 to January 1, 2009.

There were several Internet articles on this. One very informative article on the SlashGear site, explained Microsoft's official statement on the issue:

*"Early this morning we were alerted by our customers that there was a widespread issue affecting our 2006 model Zune 30GB devices (a large number of which are still actively being used). The technical team jumped on the problem immediately and isolated the issue: a bug in the internal clock driver related to the way the device handles a leap year. The issue should be resolved over the next 24 hours as the time change moves to January 1, 2009. We expect the internal clock on the Zune 30GB devices will automatically reset tomorrow (noon, GMT). By tomorrow you should allow the battery to fully run out of power before the unit can restart successfully then simply ensure that your device is recharged, then turn it back on. If you're a Zune Pass subscriber, you may need to sync your device with your PC to refresh the rights to the subscription content you have downloaded to your device" Matt Akers, Zune product team, Microsoft"*

Another really fun article on this issue was run the by the Los Angeles Times. Definitely take a look at it. They created a button to wear (or to use as a piece of flair on Facebook) I just love that button!

Okay, so perhaps this wasn't the Y2K issues, perhaps Microsoft never expected anyone would use those Zunes into 2009, and never considered the leap year or that all important leap second we experienced this year end....

**Phone calls on your iPod** - Last month I mentioned there were several solutions for making telephone calls using an iPod Touch. Myself and a friend gave it a try and it was surprisingly easy to do.

Attaching a microphone to the second generation iPod Touch was no problem. I decided to not buy the Apple variety. I found a microphone only system that was around \$15 USD. This iPod microphone plugs into the iPod and lets you plug in your iPod earbuds or any headphone with the correct connector. I am not a big fan of earbuds, so I like the option of using headphones.

We tried two different free applications. One is called Fring and the other Nimbuzz. Both of these option allow registered users to call each other (for free). Of course, this requires

that you both be online at the same time. Luckily, both let you create a friends list and online friends show up as available. These programs also let you communicate to people using other text based networks like AIM or Yahoo chat. But the voice options is cool. There were some other voice chat applications which may or may not be better then the free ones, but we didn't try them.

So there we were, two friends, sitting at a table talking to each other on our iPods using his Wi-Fi network, while his wife and kids laughed at our apparent "geekyness" The audio was fine, and there was only a slight delay between the local words and that returning from the server.

These applications will also allow one to use an Internet based VoIP service like Skype. The next day my friend calls my house, nothing unusual, except that he was calling me using his iPod Touch! He had set up a Skype account and used it to call my home phone using his iPod Touch. Cool beans! While the audio wasn't as clear as his regular phone (his voice was a bit on the tinny side), it was clear enough to easily understand. Now we are replacing our weekly phone call with an iPod call!

The call wasn't free obviously, he had to pay using his newly created Skype account. However, he was able to call my home phone with the iPod Touch and Skype rates are very good.. So I feel our experiment was completely successful! It wasn't even a very expensive experiment. I paid about \$32 for the two microphones (with shipping) and he paid \$10 for some minutes on Skype. The Applications for the Touch were free. If you are interested in trying this interesting use of technology, please give it a try.

**MacWorld Expo** - As can be expected, Apple and several other companies announced some interesting new products a the recent MacWorld Expo 2009. MacCompanion will be providing lots more information on these new products as they become available. I was really impressed with some of the features added to the new version of iPhoto.

Apple released a new version of iPhoto which offers several new interesting features. The biggest "wow" factor for me was the inclusion of face recognition. What this feature does it allow you to fine a face and attache a name to it, then let iPhoto search your database of images for other pictures that include this person! Once you have identified faces, you can then use a new faces cork-board feature to search for pictures that include this person. If several people appear in the picture, you can name them all.

FaceBook users will like the easy ability that iPhoto 09 lets you add pictures to your FaceBook account. Additionally, people viewing your FaceBook images can name any faces you didn't name yourself, and this information will come back to iPhoto the next time you connect. You can then use this information to add another named face to your collection. While I have no idea how well this feature works, it just sounds very cool!

The new locations feature of iPhoto takes advantage of new cameras that GPS stamp your digital images, keeping track where they were taken. It also allows a user to input locations manually. Based on this location information, you can search for images using popular landmarks, or specific locations. Its an interesting feature, but I seriously doubt that we will take the time to record all the various locations of the 3000 plus photos already in our library.

There are also new album and slide themes. Slide themes let you present images with some effects. However, being a fan of viewing an images, themes that squash down pictures to cutely includes several on one screen, just aren't to my taste. I am also not a

big fan of the “Ken Burns” effect. I use a big monitor so I can get a nice eyeful. I don’t like trying to remember what the one side of the image that scrolled off the screen looked like.



If you are a fan of iPhoto, you should definitely take a look at the guided tours Apple has made available.

As a final note, join me in what ever way you believe, in sending good thoughts and wishes to Steve Jobs. As you know he is having some health issues and has taken a medical leave of absence from Apple. Unlike those investors who would use this to find ways to make more money (by suing Apple? Egads, what toads!), I choose to send positive energy toward Steven and hope for his speedy recovery. I hope you will as well.

Keep on using your Mac!



## MacMod 3.0

By Anthony King

<http://www.macmod.com/site-news/1801-2008-mod-of-the-year-announced>

Amidst the announcements at Macworld and CES there was a small one that you might have missed. What with the Apple drama playing out and Palm throwing a “Hail Mary” with the Pre, who can blame you? In early January MacMod announced the 2008 Mod Of the Year.

If this is the first time you’ve heard of MacMod, just imagine a community full of creative tinkerers and you’ll get the idea. Sometimes members showcase their new icon sets, at other times, entire computer cases are fabricated to create a custom Mac.

Co-founder Jacob Thomason credits the Challenge with bringing the Mac community some of the most creative and well-known modifications ever created. Remember the Millenium Falcon Mac mini? It was built for the Challenge. Ever heard of the Modbook®? The creator of the iTablet modification helped Axiotron create the design of the Modbook® nearly two years after his mod won Mod of The Year.

Each year the modifications have grown more innovative. 2008 was no exception, and for the first time in the Challenge, a software modification won Mod of The Year. There were 19 entries into the challenge and you can see all of them by pointing your browser over to <http://www.macmod.com>. Based on the final judging here’s the top 5 finalists.

### **Leopard on Pre-AGP**

MacMod member Jimjamyahauk: “My mod challenge was to get Leopard running on the old Beige G3, B&W G3 (with G4 upgrade) and Yikes! G4 computers and ended up getting it running on a PowerMac 8500! Many people had successfully installed retail Leopard onto AGP-based G4s well below the 867Mhz speed threshold – but no one had got any pre-AGP Mac to boot.”

<http://www.macmod.com/software-mods/mac-os/1571-leopard-on-pre-pci>



### **iPhone Custom**

MacMod member Paul Knight: “Since the debut of the iPhone I thought it needed a bit more sparkle and wow. Changing the color through paint was out of the question due to durability issues, I wanted to create something special... Anyone who knows anything about metal plating knows that while gold plating aluminum is possible, it is really scrappy and wears off really easily. This wasn't a viable solution. After a lot of research and analysis of the iPhone hardware itself I came across an interesting technology, TiN.”

<http://www.macmod.com/peripheral-mods/iphone/1562-iphone-custom>



### **MacMidi**

MacMod member Richard Hunt: “My old PowerBook has led a tough life. I bought it a few years ago with the screen hanging off (broken hinges). Having successfully repaired the hinges and resprayed it (the paint was peeling of the Titanium) it was as good as new. However, after a few years of hard use everyday, it eventually developed a screen fault and collected some new knocks and scratches. It seemed a shame to throw out such a tough old machine because of a screen problem. So I decided to join the case modding fraternity.”

<http://www.macmod.com/external-mods/powerbook/1573-macmidi>



### **Xbox G4**

MacMod member Phil Herlihy: “This owerBook modification is actually a spin-off of another project. . . I’m an avid broken Xbox 360 collector, trying to develop strategies for hacking and repairing once-thought dead consoles. I’ve got plenty of empty 360 cases around with nothing to do but gather dust. When it hit me, The PowerBook logic boards are tiny. Perfect for one of those cases. Even better with PSU integration.”

<http://www.macmod.com/internal-mods/other/1590-xbox-g4>



### **Bricked Mac**

MacMod member Rpster: “I was reunited with Lego bricks with a recent trip to Legoland California. I fell in love all over again and began searching for ‘the’ project to really get myself back into Lego building. After some quick searches I found that there have been many Lego PCs built, most notably Nathan Sawaya with his Maximum Lego PC, and more recently Luke Andersen’s Black Linux Box. The only Lego Mac I could find was this tiny PowerBook 5300 powered machine. I felt it was time for a s ‘real’ Lego Mac, one that would strike fear in all the Lego PCs & Macs before it.”

<http://www.macmod.com/external-mods/mac-mini/1565-bricked-mac>



**Editor:** What better way is there to celebrate 25 years of the Mac?

# Doc\_Babad's Macintosh Tips – A Macintosh Tip or Three...

February 2009 Edition



By Harry {doc} Babad      © 2009

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Reviews were carried out on my iMac 2.8 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM running Mac OS X version 10.5.6.

**Disclaimer:** When briefly reviewing share-freeware I will often use the developers' product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developers' narratives, if they are clearly written?

*Acknowledgements — As the occasion warrants, some of the Tips I share come from Paul Taylor's Hints & Tips column <http://www.mac-hints-tips.com/>, and are used with his permission. If you have tips to share send them to Paul — [paul@mac-hints-tips.com](mailto:paul@mac-hints-tips.com). I also use user group published tips their consent if I can make the contact with the appropriate officer. Where I use any one else's tips for this column, I acknowledge both their source and their contributors. Yes, I do write down and share some of the tips I've discovered while Macin' around. If a tip or hint comes from a more traditional commercial source, I both acknowledged that fact and almost always modify the tip to personalize it for our readers*

Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, all the tips and tidbits I share, where appropriate, work on my computer. If I don't own the software but if the tip sounds interesting, I'll so note that information at the end of that specific write-up.

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**Tips I've provided this month, as always in a random order, include:**

- Drag-and-Drop Your Documents to Create a PDF
- So You Cannot delete Locked Files on External Volumes
- An Audio Cable Conundrum

- Changing {Customizing} Your Icons
- OS X 10.5 Diagnostics Are Available Without a Leopard DVD
- Desktops Disappearing After Installing Programs/Updates
- My Cursor is Freezing at Random
- Entered Text in Preview Accessed PDFs Does Not Save
- Printing Selected Text

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### **Drag-and-Drop Your Documents to Create a PDF**

Any file you could normally convert to PDF through Acrobat's File > Create PDF > From File menu item can also be converted by simply dragging it onto Acrobat's icon on the Desktop or Dock. It doesn't matter whether Acrobat is running or not — it will launch if necessary. One advantage to this approach is that you can drag multiple files onto Acrobat at the same time and each will convert to PDF and open into a new window. That's another reason why Acrobat Pro, in this instance, lives in my dock.

*Design Tools Monthly*

Paul Taylor's Tips and Hints — October 2007

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### **So You Cannot Delete Locked Files on External Volumes**

Users with external hard drives or other storage devices may occasionally run into problems accessing files on these devices, especially when attempting to delete files that are reported by Mac OS X to be "locked".

Apple Discussions poster [wholemilk](#) writes: "I'm trying to delete some files and I get the following message, 'Emptying the Trash cannot be completed because 'yourfilename.mpeg' is locked. To empty everything in the Trash, including locked items, press the Option key while selecting Empty Trash.' I've tried this a dozen different ways and it won't work. I get the same error message. I've tried the Option key (on either side and together), the command key, delete and various combinations therein -- it's still in the trash." Doc sez this is an important issues because many of us format our thumb drives or portable hard drive to FAT to allow compatibility with our PC using colleagues and friends.

*MacFixit Response* — This problem seems to be associated with drives that are formatted to the Windows associated FAT instead of Mac OS Extended (HFS+). While FAT supports files being set to "read only" or "hidden", the methods used for setting these files are not supported by Mac OS X. As such, if a file that is "read only" in Windows or another operating system, users will not be able to edit or delete the file in Mac OS X, even with administrative privileges.

This is the result of an incompatibility between the OS and the FAT file system. FAT does not support individual file permissions and instead relies on FAT-specific file attributes for features that OS X even in terminal mode cannot handle. Therefore, file handling utilities such as...

- "chmod" {e.g., BatChmod 1.51} [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/6440/batchmod>]
- Cocktail 4.2.2 [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/10909/cocktail>]
- or even the terminal command "sudo rm -f"

...to force the file to be deleted and will not work for files on FAT-formatted drives since they all rely on permissions support for file access, so Macintosh users are stuck with those files not being editable in OS X.

#### Fixes —

*Access the files in another operating system* — Windows fully supports the FAT format and its file attributes, so if users have access to a Windows PC or have BootCamp running on their Macs, they can access the drive in Windows to delete the locked files or unlock them so they can be edited in OS X. With the drive mounted in Windows, right-click the file and get properties on it. Then in the "General" tab uncheck the attributes checkboxes, including those listed after clicking the "Advanced" button. Alternatively users should be able to delete the file in Windows if it is unneeded.

*Format the drive to another format type* — If the drives are going to be used with other computers then it may be necessary to keep the drive as FAT, but if it is only going to be used with Macintoshes, then formatting it to Mac OS Extended is the most compatible format to use. Back up the files on the disk, and then use Disk Utility to format the drive to Mac OS Extended.

MacFixit Daily Newsletter, Thursday, August 18 2008

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### **An Audio Cable Conundrum**

**Question:** I'm trying to import audio from an old tape deck to my iBook G4. That iBook doesn't have a *mic/line-in* port, so I'll need to use some sort of USB device. Assuming I can buy an external device — such as Griffin's \$40 iMic — to serve as an interface between my Mac and the tape deck, what kind of cables will I need to connect the tape deck to that external device and from that device to my Mac?



**Answer:** Every device of this type that I've encountered — including the iMic — comes with the USB cable you need to connect it to your iBook. If whatever device you end up buying doesn't come with one, you'll need to find a standard A-to-B USB cable. The A side, which goes into your computer, has a rectangular male connector; the B connector is squares and connects to the USB audio interface.

The cable you need for the other leg of the connection depends on your output device and the audio interface. Typical cassette players include RCA output ports — those red and white plugs that populate the typical home stereo. USB audio interfaces sometimes have RCA inputs as well. If so, just get a standard RCA-to-RCA cable and you're in business.

The 1/8-inch mini-jack is increasingly popular on audio interface hardware. (The iMic, for example, includes mini-jack in and out.) This is the same kind of connector that your iBook's headphone port uses. If you have a standard cassette player with RCA outputs, you'll need an RCA-to-stereo mini-plug Y cable. A quick trip to Radio Shack should secure one for less than \$10 (assuming you look elsewhere in the store after the clerk directs you to the nicely made, but really expensive, Monster cables).

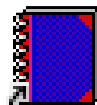
Christopher Breen  
*MacCHUG Line, Macintosh Chico UG, Oroville CA*  
Paul Taylor's November 2008 Hints & Tips Column

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### Changing {Customizing} Your Icons

Every volume, application, file, and folder on your Mac is represented by an icon. Volume icons tend to look like the item that they represent, for example, your hard disk looks like a hard drive, CDs and DVDs look like discs, and removable drives look like removable drives.

My Icon: *ACTIVE Technical PROJECTS*



Application icons are all generally unique, so they stand out from one another. Folder icons may flaunt a plain blue folder facade or display a little extra decor on the folder icons to help you identify what's inside of them. File icons generally display a document with an application logo that lets you know what application created it or can open it. But you can change these mini works of art to ones of your own choosing or creation.

To change an item's icon to another one:

1. Select the volume, application, folder, or file whose icon you want to stamp onto another, just click the icon to select it.
2. From the File menu, choose "Get Info" or press Command/I to open the Info window.
3. Click the icon in the upper-left corner of the Info window to select it.
4. From the Edit menu, choose "Copy" or press Command/C.



5. Select the volume, application, folder, or file whose icon you want to replace.
6. Your own photo file icons, such as those from a TIFF or JPEG image, are great sources to use if you want totally unique icons.
7. Select the volume, application, folder, or file whose icon you want to replace.
8. From the File menu, choose “Get Info” or press Command/I.
9. Click the icon in the upper-left corner.
10. From the Edit menu, choose “Paste” or press Command/V to replace the icon. Just paste your source icon onto the original in the Info window to give it a more unique look.

*Change Your User Icon — Your user account bears an image icon that appears when you log in, (if your Mac isn't set to automatically log you in), as your default icon in iChat and in your Address Book card. When you first set up your Mac, you had the opportunity to select a picture to use as your icon. If you're looking for a change, here's how to select a different image.*

1. Make sure that you're logged in to the user account whose picture you want to change. From the Apple menu, choose “System Preferences.”
2. Click “Accounts.”
3. Click the “Picture” tab.
4. Click “Edit.”
5. Drag any image file from your Desktop or a Finder window onto the resulting Images window.
6. Use the slider at the bottom of the window to zoom in to your picture. You can also drag the image around in the window to adjust the framing.
7. When satisfied, click Set to make the change.

*Get Icons — If you're interested in finding more icons than what is currently in your Mac, you can find plenty of third-party Mac icon creators on the web who make their designs available for download. If one suits your fancy, just copy and paste the icon as we showed you above. You can check out the icon collections on these sites:*



- Pixelgirl Presents     [\[http://www.pixelgirlpresents.com/\]](http://www.pixelgirlpresents.com/)  
This site houses over 350 Mac OS X icon sets that cover the graphics gamut from your basic designer looks to far-out funky. If you're looking for something unique, check out their designs.
- The Iconfactory        [\[http://iconfactory.com/home\]](http://iconfactory.com/home) This site contains one of the largest Mac icon archives, plus it features IconBuilder, which lets you create your own icons, and CandyBar, which changes icons anywhere on your Mac, including the Trash and toolbar items.

- InterfaceLIFT [<http://interfacelift.com/icons-mac/>] This site offers over 775 icon sets in a wide range of subjects. You're bound to find something you like here.

IconArchive [<http://www.iconarchive.com/>] The site hosts 22,300 icons that can be used for either your Macintosh, Windows or Linux.

Leo's Icon Archive [<http://www.iconarchive.com/index.php>] contains over 12,000 high quality icons for Windows, Macintosh and Linux systems. Last but not least.

- ICONS.OX [<http://www.icons.cx/icons/>]

### Why Be Limited in Your Creativity

You can also create your own icons with software such as FolderBrander [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/15288/folderbrander>] and iconCompo [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/6453/iconcompo>]. Both tools are intuitive, effective and can create fine icons from Internet images. If these don't meet your needs, there are other fine icon creation tools out there, but I've not needed to test them.

(Thanks Mac 101 at <http://apple.com>) ~ Phil Russell  
 Mouse Droppings, Corvallis OR  
 As Annotated by doc\_Babad  
 Paul Taylor's November 2008 Hints & Tips Column

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### **OS X 10.5 Diagnostics Are Available Without a Leopard DVD**

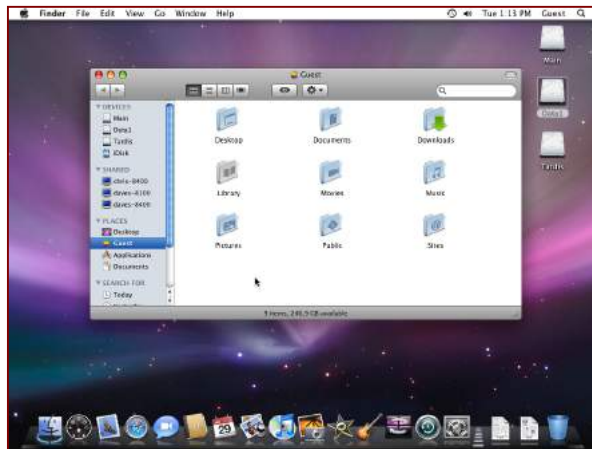
With newer Mac models, the Leopard DVD is no longer needed to run the Apple Hardware Test for diagnosing hardware problems. Users can simply boot the computers startup while holding the "D" key down to boot into diagnostic mode -- the utilities are stored somewhere on the hard drive. One Apple Discussion board user experimented with his setup, and found the system does not boot into diagnostic mode if the hard drive is disconnected. Additionally, it seems this feature is only available on original factory-installed operating systems (or reinstalls from the Apple-provided restore DVDs), so users who have upgraded from Tiger or who have reinstalled their operating systems from retail boxes may not have this feature. Speculation holds that Apple enabled this feature to facilitate diagnostics with the drive-less MacBook Air.



MacFixit Daily Newsletter  
 Thursday, August 25 2008

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## Desktops Disappearing After Installing Programs/Updates



There have been various cases in which users have either updated their systems or installed third-party applications and have experienced problems with their Desktops disappearing.

Apple Discussions poster [xtine1217](#) writes: "I downloaded a photo-editing program called Gimp the other day, and ever since then, all of the icons, files, and folders have disappeared from my desktop. They are listed in the Finder menu under "Desktop," but even

dragging will not allow anything to appear on the desktop itself."

<http://discussions.apple.com/thread.jspa?threadID=1650204&tstart=0>

When users install various programs and updates it is possible that permissions can be changed on resources that should otherwise not be touched. While most developers ensure such problems do not occur, there are always overlooked situations in which resources can get renamed or have their permissions altered, and if this happens, the system can show odd behavior similar to that experienced by this user. Similar issues have occurred in the past for users who installed the Dark Knight movie screensaver, which ended up packing the desktop contents into a separate file

### MacFixIt Troubleshooting Steps

*Does the Desktop folder exist?* — The first thing user should do is check whether the Desktop folder is present. If the folder has been either renamed or deleted from the user's home directory then it will not "Exist" to the finder and will result in an inaccessible desktop that will not hold any items. Navigate to the home folder in the Finder and ensure the folder is there, is named "Desktop", and has a unique folder icon, which indicates the Finder is properly recognizing it as the desktop.

*Are the Desktop permissions correct?* — If the Desktop folder exists, right-click it and get information on the folder. Then at the bottom of the information window ensure the first name listed is the name of the current user account. If it is not listed, click the lock and authenticate, then click the "+" sign and add the current user from the list of users. Next ensure the user has both read and write permissions on the folder.

*Remove Finder and Desktop Preferences Files* — Navigate to the user's preferences folder /username/Library/Preferences/ and remove the following

- files:com.apple.finder.plist
- com.apple.desktop.plist

When these files are removed, relaunch the finder by pressing options-command-esc to bring up the "force quit" window. Then click the finder and click "Relaunch".

Use Tinkertool to disable and Re-Enable Desktop Features — Using TinkerTool's "Disable Desktop Features" option, users can attempt to toggle the Desktop into behaving properly. This feature in TinkerTool just edits the Finder preferences file so the suggestion in #3 above should work instead, but users are welcome to try this option as well. Download a copy of [TinkerTool](http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/5721/tinkertool) [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/5721/tinkertool>] then check the "Disable Desktop Features" option, relaunch the Finder using the "Force Quit" window, and then enable the features again by unchecking the option in TinkerTool, then relaunching the Finder again when finished.

Is the Home directory renamed? — If users have somehow renamed their home directories to something other than their short login name, upon next login the system will have trouble loading preferences and other items associated with the user account. If the user is an administrator, a new account will be created for the user, which will make it appear as though desktop items and other account settings have been reset. To reset a new home folder and use the old one, open the boot drive in the Finder and go to the "Users" folder. From there, rename the current home folder to something different, such as "wrong one". Then locate the folder of the user account that was renamed (should be in the same "Users" directory) and change the name back. Then logout and log back in to properly load the user's home directory and recover settings and desktop items.

MacFixit Daily Newsletter  
Thursday, September 17 2008

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### Why Use Antivirus Software

Just a note on Antivirus software. Do we need it? I do know that we don't get many viruses Virginia boasts. . Since 1984, when I got my first Macintosh until now, I have gotten a total of — ready for this — just two. So, you have to answer that for yourself.

It is good insurance and for a small price it probably will give you peace of mind. Antivirus software is not very expensive. Doc would like to remind you that with the ever-increasing popularity of the Macintosh even to the point of two OS families we're certainly on someone hit list. Check out the MacUser-UK article by Kenny Hemphic [<http://www.macuser.co.uk/columns/244547/analysis-fear-of-infection.html>] or *Mac Security: Antivirus* by Scott McNulty, October 7, 2008, Macworld [<http://www.macworld.com/article/135900/2008/10/antivirus.html>]



The Following are three of the best-rated applications on today's market:

- Norton AntiVirus by Symantec is \$49 for one user and is easy to use.  
<[www.symantec.com/norton/products/overview.jsp?pcid=ma&pvid=nav10mac](http://www.symantec.com/norton/products/overview.jsp?pcid=ma&pvid=nav10mac)>.
- VirusBarrier X by Intego, \$60 for one user and does very fast scans and the warnings are very clear.  
<<http://www.intego.com/virusbarrier>>
- Virex by McAfee is included with the \$100 .Mac membership by Apple. The latter seems easy to use and configure. Just make sure all other antivirus software is not still installed. If you have a .Mac account, just go to your account and download it. If not, check out its website.<<http://www.mcafee.com/us>>

Of all the above listed, Virginia noted, I like VirusBarrier X the best.

Doc sez, I used the Norton tools for years and have seen no reason to change my protection. However, I'm still PO'd that Symantec dropped their fine disk management and repair suite.  
{Doc.}

~Virginia Chilcote  
*MouseBytes, Bay Area MUG, St. Petersburg FL*  
As Annotated by doc\_Babad  
Paul Taylor's November 2008 Hints & Tips Column

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### **My Cursor is Freezing at Random**

Some users have experienced a longstanding issue in which the cursor freezes on the screen, seemingly at random intervals. The problem generally forces a system restart.

Apple Discussions poster [arthurms](#) writes: "Quite often my mouse cursor freezes up on the screen and my only remedy seems to be to shut down and reboot." This problem has persisted since Mac OS X 10.5.2 for some users, and while recent updates have reduced the prevalence of this problem, it still occurs. It seems this issue is not necessarily system-wide; it occurs in certain applications, such as older Firefox version, and the login window more than others. As such, the relevant fixes for this problem can be hard to pinpoint, but the following may help affected users.

#### MacFixIt Fixes and Workarounds

*Unplug and re-plug the mouse* — Unplugging all peripheral devices including the mouse and then plugging the mouse back in (trying different USB ports if necessary), may help restore the mouse functionality; however, if not then users will have to restart. While users have resorted to restarting the computer by holding the power button down, this is not a recommended way to restart, since it has the potential to harm the system. Instead, users can bring up the shutdown menu by pressing "ctrl-eject" on their keyboards. When the shutdown options display, users can press spacebar to restart or enter to shut down. Alternately, users can send the shutdown command to the computer via the Terminal.

To do this, press command-spacebar to open Spotlight, and then enter "Terminal" to search for the terminal application. Upon opening this application users should enter "shutdown -r now" to immediately reboot the system. While this command does not allow the whole system to properly shut down and as such should be used sparingly and only when necessary, it is still better than holding the power key.

*Update driver software* — For users with third-party mice, updating the driver software may help the situation. If there are no updates from the manufacturer, users can try other driver software such as *USBOverdrive* [<http://www.usboverdrive.com/>].

*Update affected applications* — Some users had this problem with version 2 of the Firefox browser, and upon updating to version 3 found that the problem's frequency was greatly reduced. As such, if any application has this problem, we recommended that users update the application, or reinstall it if there are no updates available.

*Reset the PRAM* — The PRAM on the computer stores some mouse-related parameters that load before the user-specific settings are loaded. If there are conflicts or faults in these settings, it is possible this could lead to problematic mouse behavior. To reset the PRAM, reboot the computer and hold the **options-command-P-R** keys all at once. The computer will reset and make the boot chimes continually as long as these keys are held. After a few resets, release the keys and allow the computer to boot normally. The mouse settings should be set to their defaults, along with some other system settings such as audio volume.

*Reduce Mouse Tracking Speed* — Some users have found this problem seems to be lessened if the tracking speeds in the computer are reduced. While this indicates problems with the mouse driver, it could be a matter of problematic hardware as well that leads to the freezes when sampled at certain rates by the computer. In the "Keyboard and Mouse" system preferences, reduce the mouse speed a little and see if it helps the situation.

MacFixit Daily Newsletter  
Wednesday, October 08 2008

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### Entered Text in Preview Accessed PDFs Does Not Save

The application "Preview", which is used for viewing images as well as PDF files, has support for entering text into editable fields in PDF documents. This is convenient for entering data into forms, but users are experiencing problems when trying to save the PDF with the entered text.

Apple Discussions poster [syra](#) writes: "I'm filling out some PDF forms but when I press save all of my input text disappears."



## MacFixIt Response

While Preview supports inputting text in these fields, the program does not support saving the file as the original document. This is supposedly to preserve the original, since saving it would get rid of the ability to make further edits in the same field. Additionally, when users choose "Save As..." to save the edits to a new document, the program will not preserve the inputted text and instead essentially duplicates the original to the new location, leaving users with the same problem with not being able to save the document.

It appears this may be a small bug with how Preview handles the "Save As..." feature, especially since this is the recommended route for saving documents; however, it's possible this restriction is intentional since it is present in both Preview as well as Adobe Reader. Despite this, however, there is a way to save PDF forms with all the fields filled out.

## Workarounds

**Print the form to PDF** — When users choose to print a document, the system will convert it as-is to postscript and from there send it to printers. Since OS X has PDF rendering and creation built-in, these functions are available in many places, including the print dialogue. To save a filled PDF form, users should choose the print option from the "File" menu, and in the resulting print dialogue box select "Save as PDF" from the "PDF" menu. This will keep the entered text as is desired, but it will remove the ability to further edit the form. As such, users will not be able to enter text and save it, and then go back and change the document again. Instead users would have to start from scratch.

**Use an authoring program** PDF — Authoring programs such as Adobe Acrobat Professional should be able to enter items into text fields and save the document for further editing, but basic reader programs, including Adobe Reader, do not support this feature.

MacFixit Daily Newsletter  
Wednesday, October 01 2008

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## Printing Selected Text

Reader Michael Laurence would like more flexibility in his printing. He writes: "Is there some way to select specific text for printing rather than an entire article? When I used Mac OS 9 I used a program called Net-Print for this but it is not available for Mac OS X. I realize one can take a screen snapshot of selected text and then print it but this is a rather cumbersome way to do things."

MacEase's Steve Becker offers a variety of solutions that expand the Mac's printing capabilities. The one I'd suggest to you is the \$15 iPrint for Mac OS X.

[\[http://www.macease.com/iprint\\_main\\_page.html\]](http://www.macease.com/iprint_main_page.html) It's a straightforward utility that runs in the background. Once installed, just select some text, press Control-Option-P, and the selected text in the active window prints. You'll lose some formatting along the way, but it gets the job done.

Though both MacEase's Web site and the application icon look like they were designed in the late '90s, iPrint works with the latest version of Leopard. If you're a do-it-yourselfer, you could create an AppleScript that copies the selected text, pastes it into a TextEdit document, and then prints that document.

Macworld Mac 911 Tip of the Week  
By Christopher Breen  
September 22, 2008

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That's all folks... But I'm gathering tips faster than my space allows, so stay tipped, err tuned.

Harry {doc} Babad





# *The Northern Spy*

## Hinges of History and a Tale of Two CEOs

Technology News and Views Since 1983

By Rick Sutcliffe

### **Long ago and far away**

when the Spy was but a lad (but it was after the ark), he read a book with a rather pretentious title that went something like "Ten Battles That Changed The Course Of History". He can no longer specifically identify this tome or its author, in part because so many others have written very similar books. Much "Alternate History" science fiction is built around related themes--what if:

Adam and Eve had not sinned, (see C.L. Lewis)  
Cain had repented,  
Babylon (or a version of her) had never fallen,  
The Persians had won at Marathon,  
Alexander had not died of the flu at Babylon,  
Rome had not fallen,  
Brian Boru had survived the battle of Clontarf,  
England won at Hastings,  
the English conquest of Ireland had been the other way around,  
The industrial revolution had been centuries earlier,  
Nuclear war had destroyed Europe in the seventeenth century,  
Spain's armada had succeeded,  
Napoleon had won at Waterloo, or James at the Boyne,  
North America had never been "colonized" by Europeans,  
England had held on to the thirteen colonies,  
The South had won the Civil War, (a favourite)  
Hitler had defeated Britain in 1940, (stereotypical alternate history)  
The United States had never entered the WWI; WW2,  
JFK had lived,

your favourite here.

Quite a number of these are at the heart of the Spy's own Alternate History SF, some of which takes place on an alternate earth where the Irish rule not only their own world, but some of the others as well. But the real lynchpin of history isn't the battle itself, the parliamentary vote to end slavery, the coronation of the great leader, or even the inauguration ball.

It's the street boy who did/didn't bend over to tie his laces, causing ten-year-old Adolph to stumble and fall to his death in the path of a horseless carriage. It's the leader-to-be not rescued by a lowly soldier, not dropping out of piano lessons to take political science, the colonel who stayed for an extra piece of cake or a kiss and did receive the all-important communiqué of battle orders, the butterfly that spread its wings in Indonesia and triggered a typhoon in Japan, the child that was encouraged by a grade one teacher and never became the psychotic killer, the forest path taken or not by Little Red Riding Hood, the Steve Wozniak whose father never bought him construction toys and an electronics kit and so became a novelist, the course never steered, the mountain climbed, the Red Baron never shot down, the.... In short, it's an event that the participants are probably not aware of as important.

To be sure, God is sovereign and controls the details that accumulate to become the moment we perceive as a hinge of history. There don't seem to be many of these nexus points, and by their very nature, it is impossible to know when one is at such a historical nexus--it takes a generation or more to recognize that a door has turned. Yet, one is always tempted to speculate. Have we now arrived at such a time? Will the actions, or perhaps the mere presence in power, of this man or that woman become the keys to shaping the society of the future in a dramatic way? Yes, no, maybe.

### **Steve Jobs**

is surely one such man, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Macintosh computer is a good time to say so. iSteve and his little Cupertino company have not only been at the heart of the small computer revolution in general, but also responsible for creating or popularizing nearly every specific technological advance associated with it. More than any other individual, he has his personal stamp engraved in the machinery (and the toys) of the Fourth Civilization.

Some might demur, citing necessity as the mother of invention, and suppose that the technological advances of the last three decades would have happened anyway, and been attached another's name. The Spy persists, suggesting it more likely we'd still be using text-based DOS and UNIX were it not for Jobs. No one incident, no one device, but the sheer weight of the technology he has shepherded to fruition will one day be seen to have engendered some of the profoundest social and economic changes the human race has ever seen.

Don't take this wrong. The Spy is no rube to be enticed by the empty promises of mere toys. The fundamental heart of humankind remains as it ever has, still with the same God-shaped vacuum at its core as ever. But some people do to break out of the pack mentality sufficiently to "Think Different" on technological, social and economic issues at least. They make some things happen.

Ironically, there is no apparent or logical connection between this and the ability to do so on the far more important spiritual and moral issues.

Of course, what a stock analyst wants to know is only whether everything will fall apart at Apple these next six months without the great helmsman stalking the halls of One Infinite Loop? You heard it here first. *No*. There's too much inertia in the near to medium term, plenty of time to plan the long. Speculate all you like, but the next year's products are already mapped out, on the way to announcement. Moreover, the key conversations with engineering supplicants seeking the guru's blessing will merely take place on Jobs' own back porch instead of in the bowels of IIL research labs.

"Get that thing out of my sight, and don't bring anything like it within a mile of me until it's half as thick or heavy, four times as cool, twice as easy to use, and we can charge an extra two hundred bucks. Apple doesn't make junk, and don't you forget it or I'll have Tim fire your sorry excuse for a butt all the way to Richmond."

The bottom line for the company's near future can be easily predicted from the near past. Apple just announced another quarterly earnings record (over \$10B), once again slaughtering Wall Street estimates. Given the deferred revenue already in hand for iPhone contracts (spread out over two or more years to come), given that people are obviously not stinting on buying quality technology even if they do frequent Value Village and Wal-Mart for other items, given the reservoir of mind share that has yet to be converted to marketshare, given massive layoffs at Microsoft (and even Intel), further sales and profit records seem assured, so-called recession notwithstanding.

The only puzzler (besides which new product niche Apple will next occupy) is what iSteve's boys and girls plan to do with all those billions they're currently using to prop up their banks.

So, one man's temporary absence from a CEO position is unlikely to have an immediate impact. And, even if he guides the company no more, iSteve's place in history is secure. So is that of Apple. This naturally leads the Spy to wonder whether the presence in office of yet another CEO can make an important difference.

### **Great Expectations**

are the watchword for the new high muck-a-muck of that much smaller country that lies to the south of the (frozen) True North Strong and Free. Will the world be a better place or worse three weeks later, a year, a decade following the inauguration of the Excited States' latest CEO? Well, remember the Spy's fourth Law?

### **Marketshare lags mindshare by two to five years.**

He arrived at that maxim by first making the political and economic observation that by the time a government acts, marketplace and social data are already old, there is a good chance things have begun a cyclical move in the opposite direction, and the action taken is more likely to exacerbate a new trend than to dampen the belatedly perceived old one.

Despite the re-election imperative to be seen doing something useful, oftimes the action best for the governed is taking no action at all.

True, in the fourth Civilization, the lag time in political decision making has shortened because data is now available more quickly. However, it has simultaneously lengthened due to increasing bureaucratic, regulatory, and legal inertia. This may be a wash. So, let's not get carried away with the euphoria. Opportunities for greatness in the political-economic sphere are quite limited. Presidents and prime ministers in both Canada and the U.S. have been sworn in amidst similar mania before, but proven to be lacklustre at best, pathetic more often. What politicians in particular usually forget in the heady days of a change in power is that the nation or province still needs to be governed--and that's the real reason they end up keeping so few of the ill-considered promises that got them elected. Make fewer, break fewer.

Is this US presidency historic? For the obvious social reasons, certainly. Is Obama a great politician? By all means. Only forty-three others have achieved this office. Is he a great orator? Pretty close if not already there. A great leader? Certainly, considering the number of his followers. Will he be a great president, or will this presidency be historic for moral, social, or even mere economic reasons? Ah... call me in ten years. Better yet, make it twenty. The odds aren't good, as there hasn't been a great US presidency or Canadian prime minister ship in decades. The only recent one that could be termed historic in a positive sense was Reagan's, for his ending of the cold war (foolishly touted by the overly optimistic as the end of history).

More to the point for this column is to ask whether the new Washington order can have a significant technological impact, even if not on a Jobsian scale. The Spy believes so, more because of the man's age than his politics. He's part of a generation that, if it didn't quite grow up with technology, is at least familiar with it, uses it routinely in daily life. Somehow a president that "gets" science and technology has a novel ring tone to him. True, there are likely to be more pressing priorities. But a country's high mugwump (whatever the title) does have the power to either invigorate or to stifle science and technology, and this one gives early appearance of being more likely to do the former than the latter.

OTOH, it's probably too much to hope that he also "gets" the economy. That's more likely to heal itself once the system flushes out those behind the latest round of greed--and that without respect to his economic interventions. Of course, if he were to give in to certain unions and go all turtle-shell protectionist on the rest of the world, he'd trigger a complete world wide economic collapse, but he doesn't seem that stupid. He certainly can't address the root causes of the current woes. Cleansing the human heart of greed (a form of idolatry) is the sole task of One who is above and beyond any president or CEO.

But more specifically, Obama does carry a Mac into the White House (or he might if the House's infrastructure-challenged techno-dweebs have sense enough to let him save them support work.) That Mac suggests a mind open to ideas, to alternatives, to rational debate--in much the same way as do his choice of pastors to pray at inauguration and his cabinet picks. An open and somewhat inclusive mind weighing a nation's problems is not the only qualification for greatness, or even competence (some are open, but devoid of ideas; others are never challenged sufficiently by events to become great), but it is a pre-requisite for both.

The person with the closed mind buys a junk Windows box, even though she and everyone else knows it's both inferior and more costly in the long run. That same person approaches problems the similarly insane way--by trying again what has never worked in the past. Why? Because the herd does, and in today's North American society, it is not reason but the whim of the mob that directs decision making--another motive not to put too much trust in political salvation, for such is by its very nature both misplaced and misannounced by the mob. This is also why modern leaders of liberal democracies have little or no positive impact on the moral fibre of their nation--if they didn't reflect the herd's morality (or lack of it), they would never have been elected in the first place.

### **C.P. Snow**

made a most insightful observation when he spoke of the two insular academic cultures back in the 1950s. A scientist and a journalist both, he was conscious of having one foot firmly planted in both, but noted that few of the denizens of either had sufficient vocabulary in common for meaningful communication. Little has changed since then, for few cross the great and widening divide between the arts and the sciences, except grudgingly, for the one or two courses that liberal arts and sciences universities like the Spy's own Trinity Western require them to take.

Modern society has many other divides of similar nature, to greater or lesser effect, whether support for a team, allegiance to an operating system, adherence to collection of religious practices or moral rules, or subscription to a political, economic, or social theory. For instance, the chasm between "left" and "right" in North America is now so great as to border on the destabilizing. Politics is the new religion.

No force originating here on this earth, whether political or otherwise, can erase the barriers we erect by seeing our neighbour as fundamentally different from ourselves. Witness the idea of race, which never had any support from either religion or science, though it did from purported practitioners of both. It has always been patently obvious that the only race is the human race, though when the Spy put the case this way in the early 1970s, it was not always well received.

To take another case in point, it has become fashionable to spout a "tolerance" mantra in matters of religious and moral belief, but in practise this PC redefinition of the term is itself narcissistic, ultimately refusing to tolerate those who remain convinced that certain ideas really do matter more than others, that it is possible and even necessary to be right about at least some things, that there are eternal and absolute truths. There can never be much in common between those who believe in (and therefore live by) a specific value system, and those who say that all moral codes (or religions) are of equal value (which is the same as saying that none of them have any value). Ecumenical inclusiveness without discernment is anarchy.

Moreover, the desire to be tribally right about the importance (or not) of moral or religious values tends to extend to all areas of life, including politics, and even technology choices. (Mac/Linux/Windows). If we have become somewhat less divided by the colour of our eyes, hair, and skin, we have become much more by our beliefs and choices.

At least the widespread use of technology has tended to democratize. Behind a keyboard, no one does know who or what you are except by your ideas, and there are yet a few Internet places where those can be intelligently debated. In this at least, the Fourth Civilization still has potential to serve us well.

So, does this new CEO of the USA represent a dividing or a unifying trend? Here, his main positive aspect is the hope and optimism surrounding him--such political coin, spent wisely, may tend to make social and economic improvements that mere political policy (whether right or wrong headed) could never achieve. Yes for his past achievements, a big question mark for the future.

So, the Spy can wish well of this man, many of whose political inclinations are about as opposite his own as possible. Why? Because it's time for someone who thinks different. Yes, this new CEO does change everything--at least in part because his very election fulfills the fundamental liberal agenda of equality, incidentally forcing the movement to find a new cause, in much the same way as conservatism had to re-invent itself when Reagan defeated its iconic enemy. But in the long run, we must all look elsewhere for both substance and salvation than to human leaders. If they deliver any, it is borrowed from the Source of all. Oh, and remember that in a real melting pot (which the Spy has operated) the sludge rises to the top and has to be creamed off for discarding. So, let's us hope the model for the new White House is not in fact a melting pot, but a refiner's fire.

### **What does the hinge of history turn on?**

if it isn't the CEO, the king, the president, the financier, the general, or even *hoi polloi*? In view of the comments above, it's tempting to suppose said hinge is firmly fastened to a door frame of technology. This is at least partly right, for although necessity is the mother of invention, that is, some technology (e.g. the light bulb) is deliberately developed because society needs it in that time and space, much new technology has entirely unforeseen uses and consequences. Like the phonograph, the small computer arrived on the scene as an invention looking for an application. Both found some, but computers in particular unintentionally became the proximate cause of transforming society.

The present technological revolution has already passed through several phases, none of which could have been reliably forecast (though the Spy always thought the small computer would have greater social and artistic implications than it would scientific), but there is no way to determine if the door attached to the hinge is halfway open, or nearly up against the stopper. The Spy feels that computing technology is still in its infancy, that its ultimate role in shaping society can now only be dimly perceived (see his fiction). Moreover, there are still far too few people even asking what are the social or ethical implications of technology deployment, and these issues are ultimately far more important as hinges for society than the capabilities of its toys.

This is all a long winded and somewhat evasive way of saying that if we are indeed at a hinge point in history, whether politically, technologically, or morally, we may be dimly aware something profound is happening, but nearly incapable of analysis except in the retrospect of the next generation.

So, like it or no, Steve Jobs and his ilk have already changed the world. Barack Obama might or might not. Either set of changes might ultimately be for the good or the bad, depending on application, circumstance, and the people surrounding and influencing the course of decisions. In neither case, and in no form of purely human innovation can we say precisely where events are leading. By all means oil the hinge, but the future is the province of Another.

Rick Sutcliffe, (a.k.a. The Northern Spy) is professor of Computing Science and Mathematics at Trinity Western University. He's written two textbooks and several novels, one named best ePublished SF novel for 2003. His columns have appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, and he's a regular speaker at churches, schools, academic meetings, and conferences. He and his wife Joyce have lived in the Aldergrove/Bradner area of BC since 1972.

Want to discuss this and other Northern Spy columns? Surf on over to ArjayBB.com. Participate and you could win free web hosting from the WebNameHost.net subsidiary of Arjay Web Services. Rick Sutcliffe's fiction can be purchased in various eBook formats from Fictionwise, and in dead tree form from Bowker's Booksurge.

## URLs

The Northern Spy Home Page: <http://www.TheNorthernSpy.com>

The Spy's Laws collected: <http://www.thenorthernspy.com/spyslaws.htm>

The Spy's Shareware download site: <http://downloads.thenorthernspy.com/>

WebNameHost: <http://www.WebNameHost.net>

WebNameSource: <http://www.WebNameSource.net>

nameman: <http://nameman.net>

opundo: <http://opundo.com>

Sheaves Christian Resources: <http://sheaves.org>

Arjay Books: <http://www.ArjayBooks.com>

Booksurge: <http://www.booksurge.com>

Fictionwise: <http://www.fictionwise.com>

# *Safe, Secure and Polite Macin' — Things You Should Practice*

## How to Completely Erase the Hard Disk — Tips to Avoid Data Theft When Donating a Computer System {Even to your kids}

A new column by Harry {doc} Babad © 2009

**Introduction:** As I occasionally go through my old files, including downloaded or scanned magazine columns. I usually find, around the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month the macC article due date, some fine archived articles many that are as fresh as they were 3-7 years ago. The Macintosh moves on — focus areas change. We're finally starting to get some respect from the PC community, members of which are either switching of dual platform using their computers. I've recently spent a little time talking with friends who've taken the PC to Mac plunge or new users. I found they had very little concept of how to compute responsibly, efficiently and safety. The PC users were to busy staying alive and keeping ahead on their tasks to care. And the newbies were... Therefore, this column.

**Acknowledgements:** Unless otherwise noted I have provided the source of the material in these articles. I also found materials in the many notes I've stashed for future articles, that certain themes keep coming up, that parallel what I've read or practiced. In most cases I have acknowledged as well as significantly modified the original document(s) to personalize them for our readers. It's called research as long as credit is given where it's due.

### **Introduction**

Perhaps you have decided to forgo system upgrades and get rid of your computer system and purchase a new one. Although focused on a newer oldie that can use OS X, the suggestions also makes sense for a real oldie — as long as you tell the beneficiary of your classic Macintosh its limitations. Alternatively, you're in a pass down mode but don't want to spend the time clearing out your sensitive files, obscure shareware or your highly customized software that no one else can figure out. All of this before your sister-in-law or teenage son, the beginning gamer, inherits. After all, that older but perfectly good Macintosh is still a good productivity machine for most users and alas worth very little when sold. ...And you did add a larger hard drive, max it out on memory and kept, *up to this point*, all your systems software up to date.



They Say Charity Begins at Home — However, if you've decided to donate your old computer to a charity, local group or school, it's important to make sure your computer's *hard drive* is completely free of data.



In the *no good deed ever goes unpunished* department, you need to ensure that you don't donate more than you planned. The last thing you want to do is to pass on a computer containing sensitive business information, your "secret" love letters, or even personal information such as stored passwords, personal documents, and credit card numbers. All of this information and more you've forgotten about can be retrieved and used to harm you.

When you donate a computer, you really don't know where it may end up, or if it will go through the hands of a malicious person with the capability to restore previously recorded and deleted data. You did know that simply deleting information (Command-T) only erases the address of that material so the finder and spotlight ignore it. The trashed file, or parts of it remain on your hard drive until it gets overwritten with new material.

There are many ways to go about ensuring your data can never be retrieved. Obviously, you can choose to physically smash the drive, but there are alternatives that enable you to keep the system intact so you can donate a complete system a computer and its OS.

First some definitions so you can talk the talk before you try to walk the walk.

### **Key Terms To Understanding Disk Wiping**

*Disk Formatting* — "The process of preparing a hard disk or other storage medium for use, including setting up an empty file system. When you format a disk, the operating system erases all bookkeeping (addressing) information on the disk, tests the disk to make sure all sectors are reliable, marks bad sectors (that is, those that are scratched or otherwise damaged), and creates internal address tables that it later uses to locate information.

"Large disks can be partitioned, that is, divided into distinct sections that are formatted with their own individual file systems. This is normally only done on hard disks because of the small sizes of other disk types, as well as compatibility issues.

"A corrupted operating system can be reverted to a clean state by formatting the disk and reinstalling the OS, as a drastic way of combating a software problem or malware infection. Obviously, important files should be backed up beforehand." {Wikipedia} If you're getting rid of the computer, and want to keep your data, backups become even more essential.

You really don't want to lose those passwords, financial records, bank account numbers, social security numbers and tax records. , And hmmm... those love letters.



*Hard Drive* — A hard disk drive (HDD), commonly referred to, as a hard drive, hard disk, or fixed disk drive, is a non-volatile storage device, which stores digitally encoded data on rapidly rotating platters with magnetic surfaces (e.g., its platter). Strictly speaking, "drive" refers to a device distinct from its medium, such as a tape drive and its tape, or a floppy disk drive and its floppy disk. Early HDDs had removable media; however, an HDD today is typically a sealed unit (except for a filtered vent hole to equalize air pressure) with fixed media.

{Wikipedia} We now even have a better, but more expensive storage called a solid-state memory drive, which has no moving parts, for enhanced durability. Never the less whether its an external drive, or a built in one, the concepts remains that it's the place your computer stored the data and applications you use.

### **Okay Down to Business — Sterilize that Hard Drive or at Least it's Data**

*Erasing and Reformatting* — Simply erasing (trashing) all the data on your hard drive or formatting it is not enough security. You could spend hours going through your hard drive and deleting all the files and documents you don't want to share with the computers new owner. Don't, that does not protect you. Trashing a file or application basically only removes the shortcuts to the files, making them invisible to casual users.

Deleted files still lives and hides on your hard drive. Indeed there are many services available that will recover data; most of it from a really trashed (e.g., Katrina soaked) hard drive but are very pricy. But that is not our objective — I got carried away.

However the software tools provided by Apple for free, or third party developers do an excellent job of assuring trashed information stays trashed.



Checking your favorite software supplier or doing a quick Google search will identify many software tools for trashed file recovery will allow anyone to restore that data. You can even read the reviews on both how well they work and their ease of use. Why-Who Needs It? Oh you accidentally trashed that term paper or the draft of your new book you were working against the clock to complete. Your backups our out of date, so where do you turn? Hard disk recovery tools of course. The same tool gave the capability to bulletproof your drive that even a supper computer will have trouble getting at your data.

Caveat: this works only if the data has not been over-written. This statement, as you'll se later is not completely true, but is valid if you overwrite all the data many times. But then you system is also dead and gone. Is there a middle ground — read on!

Reformatting the hard drive is a bit more secure than simply erasing the files. Formatting a disk does not erase the data on the disk, only the address tables. It makes it much more difficult to recover the files. However a computer specialist would be able to recover most or all the data that was on the disk before the reformat.

For those who accidentally reformat a hard disk, being able to recover most or all the data that was on the disk is a good thing. However, if you're preparing a system for retirement to a charity or other organization, this obviously makes you more vulnerable to data theft.

For some individual users and businesses, a disk format may be something you consider secure enough depending, of course, on the type of data and information you saved to your computer. As long as people understand that formatting is not a 100 percent secure way to completely remove all data from your computer, then they are able to make the choice between formatting and even more secure methods. If you have decided a disk format is a good choice, at the very least you should do a full format rather than a quick format.

### **Disk Wiping Options (aka a Data Dump)**

Disk wiping is an even more secure process than reformatting. The term "disk wiping" is not only used in reference to hard drives but any storage device such as CDs, RAIDs, thumb drives, and others. Disk wiping is a secure method of ensuring that data, including company and individually licensed software on your computer and storage devices, is irrecoverably deleted before recycling or donating the equipment.

Because previously stored data can be brought back with the right software and applications, the disk wiping process will actually overwrite your entire hard drive several times with data. Once you wipe your disk, you will find it all but impossible to retrieve the data that was on the drive before doing so.

While disk-wiping algorithms differ from product to product, they all will generally write the entire disk with a number (zero or one), then reformat the disk. The more times the disk is overwritten and formatted, the more secure the disk wipe is, but the trade-off is the extra time to perform additional rewrites. Disk wipe applications will typically overwrite the master boot record, partition table, and every sector of the hard drive.

The government standard (DoD 5220.22-M), considered a medium security level, specifies three full iterations to completely overwrite a hard drive. Each iteration makes two write-passes over the entire drive; the first pass inscribes ones (1) over the drive surface and the second inscribes zeros (0) onto the surface. After the third iteration, a government-designated code of 246 is written across the drive, and then it is verified by a final pass that uses a read-verify process.

There are a variety of products available for different operating systems that you can purchase or freely downloaded online to perform more secure disk wipes. If time to perform the disk wipe is a consideration, there are also tech security companies who offer disk wipe services.

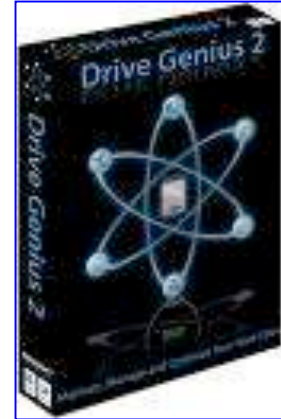
*Did You Know?* In 2003 two MIT students purchased 158 used disk drives from various locations and found more than 5,000 credit card numbers, medical reports, detailed personal and corporate financial information, and several gigabytes worth of personal email and pornography on those drives.

## **Drive Genius 2.1.x**

***The only product I know enough to share is Drive Genius. My pre OS X favorite a Norton Product was discontinued.***

***Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2 or higher. Shareware \$99***

Drive Genius is an OS X utility designed to provide storage management. Featuring an easy-to-use interface, Drive Genius is packed with powerful tools such as a drive optimizer, a comprehensive repair facility for analyzing, repairing and rebuilding volumes, plus excellent testing capabilities with media surface scanning, performance benchmarking and data integrity checking. It can be used to initialize drives, create and delete partitions, and erases them securely as per Department of Defenses standard.



## **Hard Drive Erasing**

To erase a Macintosh hard drive, boot with a Mac OS X install CD and use the Disk Utility on the drive. Apple Tech Note 107437 gives this procedure for Mac OS X Systems:

*Note:* This refers to a full Mac OS X 10.4.9 or later CD included with a computer, not to the update-only 10.2.3 CD. However the software is available to work with older OX X systems from Prosoft Engineering, its developer. [[http://www.prosofteng.com/products/drive\\_genius.php](http://www.prosofteng.com/products/drive_genius.php)]

## **Steps for Zeroing Data Using Apples Disk Utility Software**

Note to erase your boot volume you must mount the Disk Utility containing disk, since the software can not erase its on operating system.

These steps assume you have a Mac OS X 10.2.3 or later CD:

1. Insert the Mac OS X CD.
2. Restart the computer.
3. Immediately after the startup sound, press and hold the “C” key to start up from CD.
4. When the Installer screen appears, do not click “Continue.” Instead, choose “Installer > Open Disk Utilities.”
5. Select the hard drive to erase.
6. Click the “Erase” tab.
7. Select the volume format from the “Volume Format” pop-up menu.
8. Click “Options.”
9. Select the checkbox for “Zero all data.”
10. Click “OK.”
11. Erase.

For a more secure method of erasing of data, you can select the checkbox “8 Way Random Write Format” instead of or in addition to selecting “Zero all data.” This process could take several hours.

For those wanting to “Clean” individual files, note this section from Apple’s technical note:  
Secure Empty Trash You can securely empty the Trash in Mac OS X. While in the Finder, from the File menu choose “Secure Empty Trash.”

*Note:* When you securely empty the Trash, the deleted data cannot be recovered by disk utilities. You should only do this if you have a backup or you are sure you will never need the data again.

For machines which boot only Mac OS 9 or less, use Drive Setup, Apple HD SC Setup, or Internal HD Format, and select the option to zero out and/or low level format the disk. These programs are usually in the Utilities Folder on the install CDs for the various versions of the Mac OS. Apple Tech Note 21103 has more information.

**A Shareware Option** — ShredIt [<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/6863/shredit-x>] is cross-platform: it is an ideal choice for the multi-platform office. There is a ShredIt version for Mac OS X, Mac OS 9, Mac OS 8, Mac OS 7, Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows ME, and Windows XP. You can wipe a file or erase a hard drive with this easy-to-use File Shredder — computer privacy software that shreds data so it can’t be recovered. It’s available on a CD-ROM for \$34.95 or \$25.95 for the download. Users who need to dispose of confidential data on an ongoing basis appreciate how easy ShredIt is to use. Just drag the file on to the ShredIt icon and ShredIt File Shredder will wipe the file data so it can’t be recovered. If your not sure you need a shredding tool check out “*Do you need a File Shredder?* [Take the ShredIt Data Shredder Test](#). It takes less than 2 minutes, to find out.”

I’ve tested the software in trial mode, and it appears to be a fine product, but full testing will wait my having more time. Of importance to me is that ShredIt shreds everything. It will erase a file, folders, disk free space, files you’ve already deleted, whole hard drives, external hard drives, thumb ‘flash’ drives and even a floppy or a Zip disk. Now I do the later medium with an old tape degausser, left over from my reel-to-reel days.

**Remember:** Throwing data in the computer trash does not remove the file contents from the hard drive; the data can be recovered by someone else. Users who want to erase a hard drive before disposing of a an old computer can be confident that using ShredIt Hard Drive Cleaner will erase the hard drive so the data cannot be recovered by the next owner.

In Part from Apple Barrel, Ridgecrest, CA  
Harry Babad, macCompanion  
From Paul Taylor’s Hints and Tips Newsletter – October 2007

## PS

I can't let a thought flyaway undocumented, so back to restore simply trashed data. Check your favorite software supplier or do a quick Google or MacUser search to identify many of software tools for trashed file recovery will allow anyone to restore that data. Do read the review carefully because a bad tool can do more damage that you should bargain for. Focus on both how well they work and their ease of use. Check blogs to see what havoc they a product might have caused — remember the software vendor is not liable to Caveat emptor.

**Why-Who Needs It?** Oh you accidentally trashed that term paper or the draft of your new book you were working against the clock to complete. Your backups our out of date, so where do you turn? Hard disk recovery tools of course. The same tool gave the capability to bulletproof your drive that even a supper computer will have trouble getting at your data. Examples of available product include Data Rescue II

[<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/10259/data-rescue-ii>], and low-rated Disk Doctors Mac Data Recovery 1.0

[<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/30151/disk-doctors-mac-data-recovery>]. There's one I'd not heard of before *Macintosh Data Recovery*

[<http://www.stellarinfo.com/%5D> which seem to be associated with a data recovery service.

Despite the seemingly similar titles, they seem to be different products.



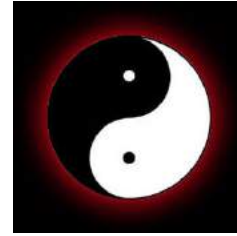
## PPS

**Next month: eMail Etiquette** — based on what fills my inbox, no not spam, you have heard it all yet!

# Rants, Raves and Revelations – February

## Customer Service: A Study In Contrasts {SmileOnMyMac's Browseback and Roxio's Toast}

By Harry {doc} Babad © 2009

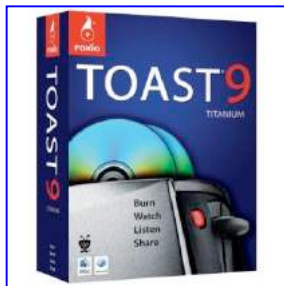


### Introduction

I've been a Macintosh user since the Lisa XL — Yes I know it was not a real Macintosh — and for sure since my first SE-30 in ca. 1987. Over the years, as both a user and software junkie; now legitimized as first as a casual MacNut & MC•MUG reviewer and now... since it's founding a contributing regular macCompanion columnist. Over those 20 years I've dealt with literally hundreds of software developers and vendors: commercial — shareware — freeware.

But some recent happening this last holiday season have opened my mind again to the contrast in customer service between the and the beautiful and the ugly in terms of customer service Let's take the beautiful first... *after all beauty before age...* something wrong there but...

Relative to software two things were memorable in December and January. First, the less than exciting editing and very tedious task on my new book hit me like a ton of bricks and I rediscovered the virtues of browseback from their periodic tips letters. Now you might not rate a newsletter that is both terse and focused a customer service, but I do — they knew I was a customer and DID NOT try to sell me anything.



Secondly, after being bombarded — yes I opted out several times — I decided to treat my self to an update to Roxio's Toast 9 Titanium. The transaction, passed through a firm call Sonic Solution, which I thought curious, different from previous upgrades, but at the time I thought nothing of it. I placed the order on December 22nd by USP Ground {8-10 business day delivery} and I installed and registered in a few days of the new year. Much to my chagrin, I received an email telling me that Toast 10 Titanium had been released and inviting me to order it. Okay sez Doc, Its only been a half-months since I got version 9, let's ask for a well deserved upgrade to the current version. That ought to be easy, since every vender I've worked with provides a free upgrade if you purchased the software recently — 90-day to a year depending upon the vendor.



That, as you'll read below, is when my saga of frustration begins.

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### Browseback — A Fine Experience



In November 2008 I did a review of Browseback 1.5, macCompanion a product which I deemed useful enough to be worth **4.5 macCs**. Oh how misguided I could be. Since the review, I've been putting a lot of time checking reference, links, and images in the new textbook I'm co-authoring to make sure the publisher's draft is perfect. Well as is usual when writing a technical book, there's a lot of web searching involved to either

track down information I knew I knew but forgot, or material I wanted to include to tell our story. In this case for "Nuclear is Hot" a book for high school students, which also meant I wanted lots of to the point illustrations. So I Googled-Googled and Google imaged for weeks.

Initially I went back to either the links I recorded, archival copies of most of the source {not all} the article's I'd made for reference purposes. Not only was this slow, but it felt more tedious than I needed, when working against time constraints. Then I remembered I still had Browseback installed, collecting the web pages, in the background, I'd visited. So I started to using it spotlight linked Find Feature is as a way of rechecking or recovering information I needed. Now some searches (nuclear) tuned up too many hits but items like hormesis and submarine worked just fine. That immediately save me time; and more poor eyes much strain. No the software is not worth 5.0 macCs but I wish I could give it a 4.75 for the way it helped me do my final corrections edit.

### ***Now the associated tips. ——— October 2008.***

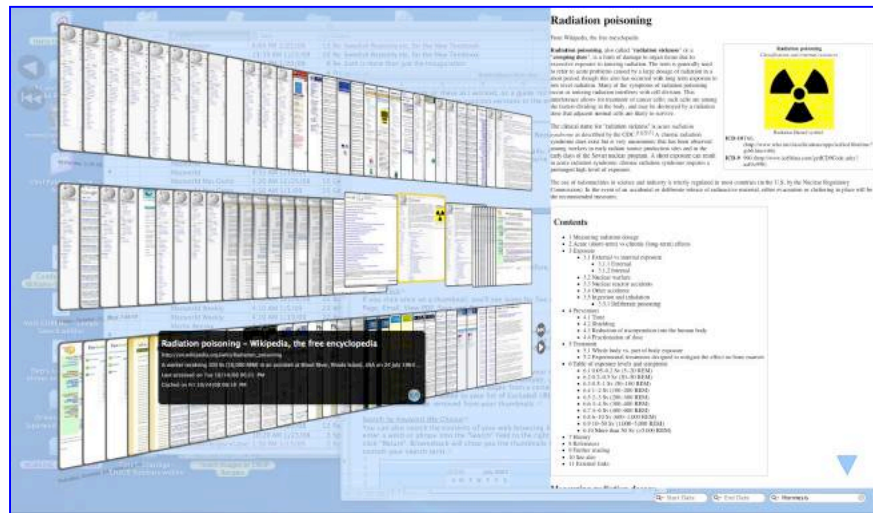
Note, I wrote a draft of these tips — sort of — as I worked, as a guide for future searches, but SmileOnMyMac provided more succinct versions in the email Tips' letters, complete with images. So There doc!



## Finding Things You Browsed Thought But Now Really Need

It's fun to shuffle through your Browseback thumbnails, but when you're ready to do something useful, it's time to start clicking. You've got three options:

**Double Click** — If you want to return to a web page you've visited before, double click on the thumbnail in Browseback.



**Single Click** — If you click once on a thumbnail, you'll see icons for five options: Browse Web Page, Email, View PDF, Save and Print.

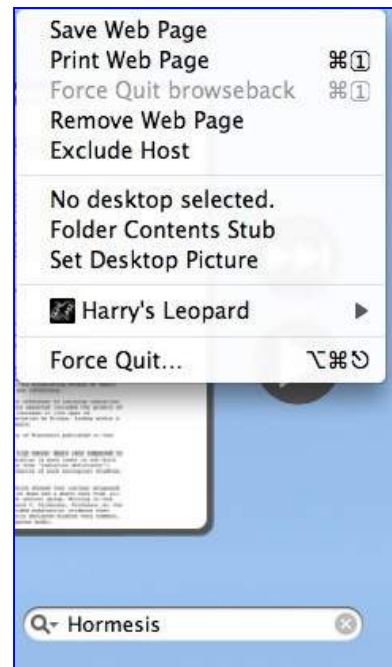
**Control Click (or Right Click)** — Hold down "Control" and click (or right click, if you've got a two-button mouse) and a Browseback contextual menu appears. This menu includes the five choices available under a single click, plus two more options: "Remove Web Page" and "Exclude Host".

If you want to just delete one page (you don't want your spouse to see a birthday present you ordered on Amazon, for example), use "Remove Web Page." If you want to get rid of all the pages from a certain site, choose "Exclude Host." That site will be added to your list of Excluded URLs and all the pages from that site will be removed from your thumbnails.

### Search by Keyword (*My Choice*)

You can also search the contents of your web browsing history by keyword. Just enter a word or phrase into the "Search" field to the right of the Date fields and click "Return". Browseback will show you the thumbnails for all the pages that contain your search term.

You can refine your search with "Boolean" operators AND, OR and NOT. For example, if you search for *purple AND iguana*, you'll get all the pages that contain both of those words. If you use *OR* instead, you'll get the pages that contain either purple or iguana. *Purple NOT iguana* will find any page with the word "purple" but not "iguana".





Important: the Boolean operators are case-sensitive, i.e. they must appear in all caps. For more information on advanced search options, refer to "Searching" in the Browseback Help file.

#### Search by Date (*Who Remembers Dates?*)

You can limit your search to specific dates. In the bottom right corner of the Browseback screen, you'll see fields for "Start Date" and "End Date". When you click into these fields, a calendar pops up. Click on the date you want, and Browseback automatically shows only the thumbnails of pages you visited from the Start Date until the End Date you select.

#### What About Those Little Triangles that turn up in Search Fields?

The little triangle *thingies* in the search fields means that you can access previous searches by just clicking on the magnifying glass. You'll get a list of dates or keywords you've previously searched on, in case you want to repeat a search.

Well, how about that — clean — simple — too the point.

Moving right a along, now about my *sonic boom*, or is that [bust](#).

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#### **I Got TOASTED by Roxio**

I learned a long time ago that if I was going to *ding* — a right badmouth someone follow the KISS rule. It's better for my blood pressure.

*Background* — I heard about Toast 10 Titanium being released less than a month after I received my copy of Toast 9. Okay lets check the website

[<http://www.roxio.com/enu/products/toast/titanium/overview.html>] and contact customer service so they can make it good.



Surprise Number 1 — There is no contact number or email address for customer service on Roxio's site. All that was listed was access to Technical Support. I did find information to seek help with *Pre-Sale Questions*. Okay, I'll give it a try; the claim seems reasonable.

"Have a question about our software before you buy it or want to purchase the software over the phone? Our sales representatives are here to help! Please call 1-877-MY-ROXIO (1-877-697-6946) Monday - Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., EST - excluding Roxio holidays."

I also noticed, a good sign I thought, that they had a refund policy, albeit one with severe limitations.

"Roxio has an unconditional 30-day money back guarantee\* for products purchased directly from Roxio through our online store or over the telephone with our Inside Sales department. Shipping charges will not be refunded. To request a refund, please call 1-800-656-5443 or go to [www.findmyorder.com](http://www.findmyorder.com) and login with your order details then click Return. \*Note: The return option will be removed after 30 days from the date of purchase."

So you've only 20 days to change your mind if you buy ground UPS.

Roxio must have lots of holidays, because over three days, and 5 attempts at reaching them, I finally succeeded. No they did not and could not provide me with a free upgrade. So I need to call the refund {desk} 1-800-656-5443 to see if they could do anything for me.

Okay, another round of ring around the automated answering service, several cutoff, a few days later I finally connected. Yes they found me in the computer and yes I was within 30 days of purchase limit. No they had no way of doing what I wanted — it was against company policy and that was set by Sonic Solutions. The Roxio agent gave me a telephone number but that didn't work for me, it was to another a Roxio call center.

Okay Google to the rescue, I hope. I checked the Sonic Solutions page but to no avail. [<http://www.sonic.com/consumer.aspx>] Everything related to Toast was routed back to Roxio. Another do-loop... So back to Roxio's customer "refund" service for a last and final try. I again got a {different} human being at last. After not getting what I needed from the agent I asked to talk to his manager. No help there, and he did not have a Sonic Solutions phone number for me to use.

My only choice, return the product at **my own** expense for a refund. Then order a new copy of Toast 10 Titanium at a cost (not including shipping) for **\$20 more** than I paid for version 9.

I will never either recommend, despite the quality of the product, anything Roxio makes to anyone, with out sharing my story. Doc.

Caveat emptor – Let the buyer beware.

[No you don't really want to know more details but if these were billable hours, at my lowest NFP rate, I could have put an appreciable dent in my Holiday gift bills.]

We that all for now, more when something else get either my danger up, or catches my eye. Doc.

PS:



I'm otherwise very please with Toast 9 Titanium — it is more stable, agile and user friendly that Toast 7 or 8. No I don't need all the new features, but the extra performance is well worth updating. Especially if there actually were the normal update price.

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# *Things Apple Needs To Do - And We Know Better!*

By Wayne Lefevre

I watched with interest this past Macworld. I say I watched, because living back East, and with these “economic times,” I was unable to attend this year. That however, is nothing new, as I’ve never been able to attend a Macworld! But that’s neither here nor there. One thing it does allow is the ability to sit back and take in all the announcements and reports that are reported, sometimes to much amazement and amusement.

Often, and really much too often, there are blog posts that explain what a company is doing wrong. One can usually take these with a grin and a grain, because usually it boils down to one bloggers conflict of something a company usually hasn’t done for the writer. Often it becomes personal. Joe Blogger got mad because Company X didn’t come out with a new spring line of Speedo™ Swim Suits.

What happens, though, when Joe Blogger turns into someone “real”? A real-life journalist with actual qualifications working for a national print magazine. Does that make a difference? It’s become a very fine line. Bloggers are clambering to be recognized as a legitimate sources of information as print journalists are struggling to maintain integrity with the openness and demands of the more-information-now atmosphere of the Internet.

## **InformationWeek IT Magazine**

It was under this very fine line that I read an article from InformationWeek and realized that the line was being blurred even more to the point of filing it with downmarket tabloids. The National Enquirer and its ilk. I’m going to pick on this one particular article, since it’s the one that drove me to comment in this column. However, it’s not the only one, and unfortunately we are seeing it more and more lately. This one really surprised me, though. I used to read it every week when working as a MIS Analyst at Mrs. Fields Cookies almost 20 years ago, and to see it putting out tripe like this really astounds me.

The article in question is named"

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/hardware/mac/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=212701524>  
[Apple: 10 Things It Needs To Do In 2009](#). I’d like to offer a bit of a rebuttal against this article in particular. Why? Because I can. I don’t get paid for this. I am not a professional writer, but I do know that sometimes you have to just say time out, step back and try to get a new prospective on things.

It starts out at Number One with comparing Steve Jobs with Willy Wonka, locking himself up in Apple's headquarters so he doesn't have to talk with people anymore. Journalist Mitch Wagner, who wrote the article, even brings in great sources. Fellow InformationWeek contributor John Welch, who bestows his own journalistic aptitude by saying Apple "HATES unmanaged random customer contact. Apple doesn't want to talk to you. Apple has never wanted to talk to you." Wagner furthers that anti-customer stance by writing Apple "wants to eliminate that contact entirely – except involving customers handing over their credit cards." and "Indeed, Steve Jobs doesn't want contact with anyone – not even Apple employees. And that's the real reason Steve Jobs didn't attend Macworld this year."

Wow. Really? First in regards to Steve Jobs not wanting contact with anyone. I say, Who cares? So what? Did these guys even give any consideration to his illness? Not even that, but when did someone being an introvert have a direct correlation to how successful you are in running a business? How many CEOs of Fortune 500 companies do you know personally? Really? They haven't called you lately? Come to your kid's birthday parties? Think about it. Maybe a certain CEO didn't call you back when you wanted to score the "big interview" for InformationWeek...

Also, if Apple as a company has some sort of secret, anti-customer, no contact directives, it seems pretty strange that they are continuing to build more and more retail stores. You know, the non-online, face-to-face shops.

**"Users don't just want performance out of an OS upgrade – they want features. New, bright shiny things to play with."**

Now I know that a lot of us has read the "Dummies" books, but the publisher Wiley doesn't really believe that their customers *are* dummies. I'm not so sure about this guy. Now, not only is he telling us how Apple should run their business, but he's letting us know what we want.

As far as having an OS that is new bright and shiny without the performance. Well, I think we all know who would fall under that category. I think we also know how well that turned out. Under the same heading he quipped, "And if Apple can't deliver new features, at least it can cut down on the bugs." That's probably one of the most idiotic things I've ever heard considering that's exactly one of the things Apple is trying to accomplish, and has said as much!

**And it goes on and on.**

I really could go on and on, and it only gets worse. I'm hoping that you are starting to get the point I'm trying to make. If you are interested, though, here is a quick run-down on some of the others.

“Add Basic Features To The iPhone.” – “The iPhone does so many difficult things so well, why does it fall down on these apparently easy things?” (cut/paste, multitasking, real-time spoken-out-loud turn-by-turn directions, more.) Well, maybe because these things aren’t as “apparently easy”? Security? Liability? Ease of use? Wants it to run the best it can with limited resources?

“Come Out With A Netbook.” - I can’t really argue with this one, as I wouldn’t mind one myself. But I certainly don’t know why they haven’t come out with one. I don’t have the incredible resources that Apple, and apparently to certain members of the press, has available to it. You know, things like marketing research, the cost of making such a product versus the return, little stuff like that. Apparently, they don’t take things like “because I just want one” into consideration!

“Establish A Clear Path of Succession.” - “Apple needs to publicize a plan for what the company will do when – not if – Jobs is unable, or unwilling, to lead.” Right. Because every company knows who the next CEO will be. Wait; in every company’s prospectus there is a line of succession, right? Nothing having to do with a vote or a board of directives or anything, right?

“Develop Low-Power, High-performance Processors For Portable Devices.” - Um, aren’t they doing exactly that?

“Clarify Policies In The App Store.” - I’ve got to agree there, too. But see, here’s another one that I am split on. I had absolutely no problem in not being able to purchase “Fart Apps.” Obviously, there are some that are buying, but I personally don’t want to see a picture of an actual anus when I’m flipping through the apps. It’s a cartoon, true, but there’s one app that shows this guy bending over and shows his anus. What a true piece of art, and fun for all ages! But again, I am not a developer. I have not read the rules and regs for developing and then selling those apps on their store. Therefore, I have no right or business in even commenting on it, unlike some.

“Improve Enterprise Support.” - Again, I suppose if they wanted to, they would!

“Continue To Fight Against DRM.” I think they are. “Apple needs to take a stand and eliminate DRM from its products.” Again, they are! “Apple is doing whatever it can to kill DRM. They need to keep it up.” OK, now I give up. You tell ‘em!

“Stay Classy Apple” - “So the final bit of advice for Apple is to continue to trust its own judgment, and prosper by selling great products.” OK, so if I understand this correctly, now we go against everything that we were just explaining to Apple that it needs to do. Hmm...



## To Wrap Up

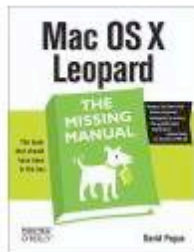
I think Apple needs to create a Home Media Server. They didn't announce it at this last Macworld, so I'm a little bummed. However, at the cost of perhaps making a couple of enemies, I don't presume that because I put a little PRESS card in the band of my hat that it somehow gives me the know-how to run a multi-billion dollar company!

Giving one a press pass or any kind of journalism credentials and suddenly they know how to better run a company than those doing it is just plain ridiculous. It's so easy to sit back and write about how everything should be. Now how about just writing about what things are. Really, things are done for a reason. If you personally don't think they "get it", create your own company.

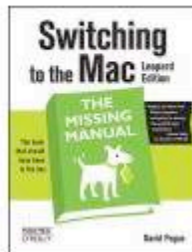
They get it, they really do. It's just not on my timetable or what I *think* they should get. Perhaps if we focused more on what we needed to do and less on what others should do, then perhaps this whole world would be better off. I'm not trying to downplay "credible" journalists, it's just that this is how news is made, and that's the last thing that news organizations need to be doing.

# Books

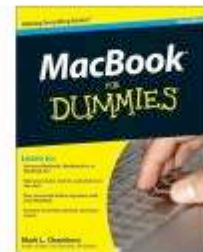
## Amazon macCompanion Store



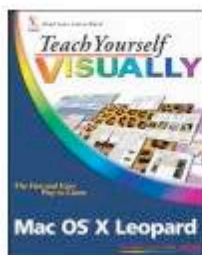
[Mac OS X Leopard: The Missing Manual](#)  
by David Pogue  
**\$23.09**



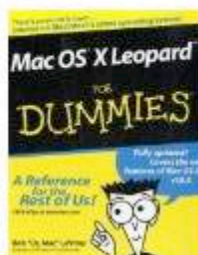
[Switching to the Mac: The Missing Manual, L...](#)  
by David Pogue  
**\$19.79**



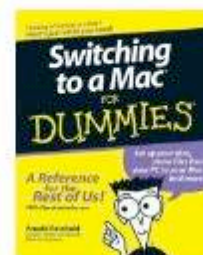
[MacBook For Dummies \(For Dummies \(Computer/...](#)  
by Mark L. Chambers  
**\$16.49**



[Teach Yourself VISUALLY Mac OS X Leopard \(T...](#)  
by Lynette Kent  
**\$19.79**



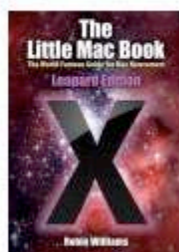
[Mac OS X Leopard For Dummies \(For Dummies \(...](#)  
by Bob LeVitus  
**\$14.95**



[Switching to a Mac For Dummies \(For Dummies...](#)  
by Arnold Reinhold  
**\$14.95**



[Mac OS X Leopard Bible](#)  
by Samuel A. Litt  
**\$23.09**



[The Little Mac Book, Leopard Edition \(Littl...](#)  
by Robin Williams  
**\$13.59**



[The Mac OS X Leopard Book](#)  
by Scott Kelby  
**\$14.99**

# Adobe Creative Suite 3 Bible

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Authors:** Ted Padova and Kelly L. Murdock  
**Publisher:** Wiley Publishing, Inc. 111 River Street,  
Hoboken, NY 07030  
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470130679.html>

**Released:** October 1, 2007

**Pages:** 1,296

\$45 USD, \$54 CND

**ISBN-10:** 0470130679

**ISBN-13:** 9780470130674



**Strengths:** Enormous in-depth guide. Screenshots are fairly readable. Introduction to the new application interfaces (except Dreamweaver which did not change) has a good set of toolbox windows. Understanding Version Cue and Adobe Bridge is included.

**Weaknesses:** Black and white instead of color. Hard to read. Special notes are all rectangular and don't stand out. Does not talk about Macintosh users. Mostly text laden. The look of the text is very drab and is some of the poorest I have ever seen. The guide structure could use more numbers or something to break up the plethora of text. The Parts of the books (sections) focus on using the Creative Suite tools instead of focusing on the applications.

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

## Introduction

Web creation and publishing has evolved over the years since HTML was once the only way to publish on the internet. Now there are many new programs, applications, software, and other tools that can help web publishers, novice to advanced. In addition new versions of the software are arriving yearly which can make keeping up with web publishing efforts more difficult. Assistance might be needed to start, develop or advance web building skills, especially to speed up your efforts. If so, Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies, may be a book to answer your learning needs.

Ted Padova, has written Adobe related books while Kelly Murdock has also authored books and worked with web design, graphics and multimedia. They have pooled their efforts to develop a comprehensive huge guide book for computer users who wish to develop graphics and web design while using the six application Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, InDesign, and Acrobat.

This massive 882 page book includes an introduction, a series of tutorials that span seven sections and a big index. This Black and White tutorials covers nine parts that guide you through 38 chapters. The readings and tutorials are meant for helping to create dynamic websites. Utilizing the latest web design tools, these authors outline a series of tutorials to complete necessary steps to start, develop and finish websites. Along the way, this guide utilizes the six applications, to “walk” the web user through the six different applications which most web professionals use on a daily basis. However learning about these applications are scattered throughout the Sections.

Each section of the book is a book in itself. The authors attempt to create an user friendly guide that offers in-depth instruction. But there is much that keeps this from happening for me and possibly others, depending on how you like to learn.

The sections of the book (called Part) are: Getting to know the Creative Suite 3, Getting Started with Design, workflows, working with objects and images, working with type, Using creative Suite and Microsoft Office, Working in Creative design workflows, Document repurposing, Creative Suite document delivery workflows and Printing and digital prepress. This method focus is applying skills instead of focusing on the applications themselves. And for the most part, I would applaud this approach but it seems that the way the book is written, make this approach less learnable.

The book is written with a PC computer in mind and includes Microsoft Office. While I use Macintosh that did not bother me. It is the fact that the authors did not include any information about Macintosh users was a little baffling. Screenshots are employed and they are PC oriented. This is fine but there is little or no information by the authors to define how Macintosh users or the PC user who has switched to a Macintosh, can use the book.

Most of the book is text laid out in the paragraphs. Screenshots are readable for the most part with “Line pointers” used within the screenshots. These help the reader “see” more precisely what the tutorials are targeting during the instruction. But these don’t appear in many sections of the book. This makes the tutorials more difficult to understand, as the reader has to sometimes “fish around”, to find and try to connect between, what the authors are saying and the reader is perceiving. It would have been better if more of the text or information were laid out in Tables and Illustrations form, numbered or something else to cut down all the text.

## **Conclusions**

While I am sure the authors are very competent, they have created a book that “falls far short” in many ways. I have designed and created websites for several years. I am always trying to improve my efforts, but when a book makes the job more difficult, instead of assisting how to use the application, there is trouble. When starting out, I found that Dreamweaver was and still is, a very finicky program to understand. In many cases, no matter how much I tried, with the program and using books, I still could not understand and get the job done. It was a combination of the book and the application and perhaps my learning style. Starting out as a novice, at that time, I needed less text, in some cases, better targeted screenshots and better layout of the instruction.

I thought that this book had potential. But the text and how it “looks”, is some of the poorest I have ever seen, for an instructional book. It basically looks, feels and reads like a college textbook instead of a user friendly guide, for website and software application users. Whether you are a PC or Macintosh user, I feel that you should look elsewhere to find help with the learning and using Creative Suite 3 and its applications.

# Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Authors:** Damon Dean, Andy Cowitt, Jennifer Smith, Christopher Smith

**Publisher:** Wiley Publishing, Inc. 111 River Street, Hoboken, NY 07030

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470120991.html>

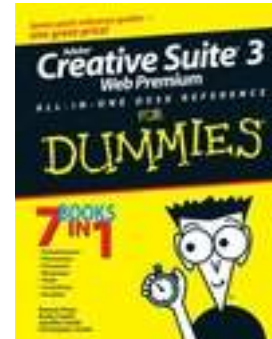
**Released:** August 2007

**Pages:** 882

\$35 USD, \$42, CND, 23 GBP

**ISBN:** 0470120991

**ISBN:** 9780470120996



**Strengths:** All in one guide for those seeking further formation more information about all types of web related knowledge. Good tutorials for seven web applications with tutorials in one book. The tutorials are a good overview.

**Weaknesses:** Black and white instead of color makes the book a little drab. Those seeking a comprehensive guide for one or more of these applications might want to use another book as a supplement. No CD for files to try out or trial applications to try and use.

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

## Introduction

Web building and publishing has evolved in many ways over the years. The web building language HTML was once the only way to publish on the internet. Now there are new applications, different software, and other tools that help web publishers, novice to advanced, publish their websites and works on the World Wide. Sometimes a little guidance is helpful to start, develop or advance web-building skills. If so, Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies, may be a book to answer much that you need to learn.

The four authors, all who have background in web design and development graphics and and/or adobe application development, have crafted an easy to understand and comprehensive guidebook for helping create dynamic websites. Utilizing the latest web design tools, these authors outline a series of tutorials that take a web user through the necessary steps to start, develop and finish websites. Along the way, this guide utilizes seven applications to “walk “ the web user through seven different applications which most web professionals use on a daily basis. This massive 882-page book includes an introduction, a series of tutorials that span seven sections and a nice index. The book’s sections (called Books), cover the following applications: Dreamweaver CS3, Photoshop CS3, Illustrator CS3, Flash CS3, (new) Contribute CS3, Acrobat 8. The tutorials are well written and the tutorials are easy to understand.

Each section of the book is a book in itself. But as the authors indicate, each book is an introduction and perhaps more but they are not a comprehensive, in-depth guide. While this book is written with a PC computer in mind by using screenshots and keyboard commands, the authors also include information (in introduction) for the Macintosh user or the PC user who has switched to a Macintosh. A “tear out sheet “ also includes a synopsis of these keyboard commands and more Helpful informative visual icons are “sprinkled” throughout the book.

These are part of many of the Dummies books that target specific and insightful information to know and learn about. Five icons, strategically placed throughout the pages, help the reader understand important ideas that are necessary for increased understanding. The icons for this book, (entitled: Tip; Technical stuff; Warning!; Remember; New to; Integration), serve to include precise additional information to assists the readers during the reading. These targeted instructions, ideas and explicit helpful information, otherwise might be lost, unnoticed in a “sea of text” or would obscure the needed integration of all the information.

There are additional helpful visuals that make the reading of the Dummies books, and this book in particular, enjoyable and enlightening. Screenshots are smaller than usual but readable. “Line pointers” within the screenshots, help the reader “see” more precisely what the tutorials are targeting during the instruction. This makes the tutorials easy to understand, as the reader does not have to “fish around”, to find and try to connect between, what the authors are saying and the reader is perceiving. Technology related humorous cartoons are inserted into the front of each of the parts. Tables and illustrations numbered Part of the book and the title of that sections on the top left page on the outside corner; chapter numbers and titles on the outside right page. The pages on the right side have tabs which indicate the subject / title of each page. While meaning to be a helpful guide, these are vertically staged, so you have to turn you head or the page to actually read the titling. But the tutorials are numbered and each has bold faced text at the top of paragraphs below. To the author's credit, the topics of each book (part) are comprehensively displayed and the tutorials relate to many need to understand topics.

## Conclusions

I have designed and created websites for several years. Like many web creators, it is always a “work in progress” , to improve and update blogs and websites. This book would help those who want to start and design web pages a good way to start and like myself, help upgrade skills and information about website building.

Novice users could understand how to lay out pages, creating text, inserting graphics, working with basic animation, images, sound, video in Flash as well as using PDF files in Acrobat and integrating Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, and Contribute with other Adobe products. The book is a great way to get started or upgrade your skills with one or more of the seven applications. Even though I don't have the latest versions of PhotoShop or some of the other applications, it is nice to know what applications are being upgraded. Also while I am not a fan of Dreamweaver (I know it is the standard), it seems to have improved in becoming a bit more user friendly. What is possibly the best idea for Dreamweaver, is that there is now an extensive Help menu in the main menu. This is very welcome because it is needed, mainly because as I found before, it is far from being user friendly. When I first started with it was so unmanageable and frustrating, I quit Dreamweaver. Within two weeks, using a similar website builder, I had a nice website started) despite this difficult to use piece of software). Even this book's Dreamweaver section might persuade me to give it a try. There is a wealth of knowledge to know and understand in this book and it might also help persuade you to “take the jump “ to trying website building or using one or more of these applications or upgrading. I just wish it the book had color but the rest of the visuals make for a good instructional guidebook. I think most users would be pleased with at least giving it a chance to help upgrade their skills.



# *A Digital Photographer's Guide to Model Releases: Making the Best Business Decisions with Your Photos of People, Places and Things*

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Author:** Dan Heller

**Publisher:** Wiley Publishing, Inc. 111 River Street,  
Hoboken, NY 0703

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470228563.html>

**Released:** March 31, 2008

**Pages:** 288

\$30 USD, \$33 CND

**ISBN-10:** 0470228563

**ISBN-13:** 978-0470228562



**Strengths:** Comprehensive information about model releases. Full color and additional hints abound through the book. Excellent model photographs highlight nice examples. Vertical tabs at the side of each page highlight main part of the section. Nice yellow like sticky notes are strategically placed throughout the book and the pages, to portray tips and highlight specific concerns or ideas that are relevant to the chapter/ pages or text.

**Weaknesses:** None.

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

## **Introduction**

Taking photos of people, places and many types of visuals for publication, is commonplace. However, in many lines of work, the necessity and use of model release forms is misunderstood, to say the least. Sometimes the nuances are not quite understood or well defined in many cases, by photographers or the places of business themselves. The book, "A Digital Photographer's Guide to Model Releases", helps to clarify the meaning of much of the process and update advanced in print media and more in recent years.

The author has been a freelance photographer and photo industry analyst. His works have been featured in publications from news and business media to fine arts books. This book is the result of over five years of his research to model releases. He is well versed in the changing trends that have transformed books, the press, music and much more, in recent years. His knowledge is transmitted to this book in a very readable and understandable way.

The seven-part book covers a wide range of important topics within its 288 pages. The titles of the parts of the book highlight the necessity of model releases. These are: Everyone's doing it; So what's wrong; What's a model release; Understanding "use"; Analyzing the need for a model release; Dealing with photos of property; The business of Licensing. The book makes it much easier to clarify when releases are needed and not needed. What buyers need in the way of model releases, and those who don't need releases are summarized. Also included is information for marketing and licensing all your photos, whether they have been released or not. Also the author does the best he can in accumulating years of information and distilling helpful information in one book.

The book is relevant to those in the United States and abroad. The author helps to define in clear terms, what should be initiated and followed through, under many situations and circumstances. He is clear and concise so that misinformation does not occur and clarity of the releases are understood. The well-illustrated text is a very comprehensive book available on the subject, covering everything you would to know about model releases. The releases pertain to people, places and additional circumstances. Much has changes in light of a photographer's role in the creation of photographs that may be uses on or in conjunction with the Internet, with digital photography. newspapers, books and magazines.

## **Conclusions**

This important book is both insightful and a pleasure to read and understand. The book is useful for everyone from professional photographers, whose work involves photography, to those amateur photographers who take vacation pictures on vacation, take photos of at their children's teams/games, schools or more. This book also includes information about models themselves and what they can learn about their rights concerning how they can protect themselves and when that is not possible.

The importance of this book is highlighted by the fact that a well known technology firm "stole" (or should we say "did not secure properly"), music from my daughter's business/ firm. Whether it was on purpose or not, she had to set them straight and went through the proper channels. This was an interesting event and it served to highlight what should and needs to be done. In addition, a firm in Africa wanted to use one of my photographs for their greeting cards. To make a long story short, I had to find that person and that firm after they used my photographs, as the individual did not forward my payment. If I would have had the information from this book, I would have known the proper course of action to protect the transaction. This book would have let me know in advance, the proper procedures, so that the situation would have not occurred. Now I am better prepared. And you will be too if you read this well-prepared book.

Whether you are in business, work with photographs at your home, business or use photos for personal use or involved in possible interactions with businesses, schools or more, this book is well worth reading. There is something to be said for knowing and understanding your rights, as well as the rights of clients and businesses and anything that relates with and dealing with photography and photorgaphs. That way you can make the best decision about your photographs that possibly will end up in businesses, books or elsewhere.

# MediaWiki: Wikipedia and Beyond

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

**O'REILLY**<sup>®</sup>

**Author:** Daniel J Barrett

O'Reilly

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596519797/index.html>

**Released:** October 2008

**Pages:** 374

\$40 USD

**ISBN 10:** 0-596-51979-6

**ISBN 13:** 9780596519797

**Requirements:** Some knowledge of PHP programming.

**Strengths:** This is how Wikipedia became successful – using the MediaWiki PHP foundation.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

**MediaWiki:**

<http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>

**Sites using MediaWiki:**

[http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Sites\\_using\\_MediaWiki/en](http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Sites_using_MediaWiki/en)

## Introduction

MediaWiki is the world's most popular wiki platform, the software that runs Wikipedia and thousands of other websites. Though it appears simple to use at first glance, MediaWiki has extraordinarily powerful and deep capabilities for managing and organizing knowledge. In corporate environments, MediaWiki can transform the way teams write and collaborate.

This comprehensive book covers MediaWiki's rich (and sometimes subtle) features, helping you become a wiki expert in no time. You'll learn how to:

- Find your way around by effective searching and browsing
- Create and edit articles, categories, and user preferences
- Use advanced features for authors, such as templates, dynamic lists, logical parser



- functions, and RSS, to organize and maintain large numbers of articles
- Install and run your own wiki, and configure its look and behavior
- Develop custom wiki features, called extensions, with the PHP programming language and MySQL database

This book also provides special guidance for creating successful corporate wikis. For beginners who want to create or work on collaborative, community-driven websites with this platform, *MediaWiki* is the essential one-stop guide.

## What I learned

What is a wiki?

"A **wiki** is a page or collection of [Web pages](#) designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified [markup language](#). Wikis are often used to create [collaborative websites](#) and to power community websites."

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>

I administer/direct the Pure Energy Systems Wiki site (the community-built resource that focuses on alternative, clean, practical, renewable energy solutions) and we use MediaWiki as our platform. I use MediaWiki on a daily basis, so when I was challenged to improve the look and feel of the site, I figured I'd better know something about the foundation on which the site is based. <http://www.peswiki.com>

Because we went 3<sup>rd</sup>-party to update the server-side software for the site and perhaps a few thousand dollars were exchanged (I'm guessing, based on the hourly rate of the "consultant" provided by the host), the process was perhaps more painful and time-consuming than it otherwise needed to have been.

MediaWiki is obviously PHP-based and is used by thousands of site managers. For me, it has been "baptism by fire", since I became accustomed to using Joomla, and Dreamweaver in managing and developing websites. Imagine my surprise, that after all that effort, I could have referenced this book in my dealings with PESWiki.com – but it was published much later than when I started. Much of what I "learned by doing", can be found in this book, but it goes much further than I thought possible.

Wikipedia has a \$6 million annual budget for developing and using MediaWiki. PESWiki is modeled after that format. Wikipedia has millions upon millions of page views. Since I started working on PESWiki, it has gone from around 1,000 page views per day up to 25 million page views per month and it is growing. It is finally going viral, after having been the vision of Sterling Allan many years ago (but it is still his baby). As of this writing, there are 4, 170 registered users and 15, 980 pages in the database. It keeps me "very busy".

We've tried using private wikis with *macCompanion* in the past, but I was put-off by the esoteric effort necessary to "collaborate" and we terminated those. You get used to doing things a certain

way and it is difficult to break out of that shell. Wikis are not for "everyone". It does one thing and does it well – Online collaboration and information dissemination.

The book has shown me how to do something previously thought "impossible" to do – forms and dynamic pages. I can also experiment with all kinds of extensions, so I do not need to be reinventing the wheel – or if I wish, I can devote time and effort to creating my own PHP extensions for PESWiki. As it is, PESWiki will continue to morph, as I get a better handle on the technology. There are still a lot of things we want to accomplish.

As you may have guessed, I've dog-eared the heck out of this book – which makes it a keeper.

## **Conclusion**

This book saves me time. I wish I had been able to read it sooner, rather than later. If you have been tasked with creating a wiki for your corporation or enterprise, why not try this PHP-based application? Who knows, perhaps you could be the proud owner of the next "Wikipedia"!

Now if we could just get some of that \$6 million annual budget Wikipedia is using...

# Photoshop CS4 for Dummies

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Authors:** Peter Bauer

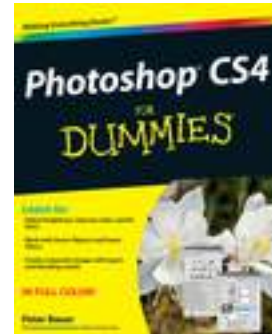
**Publisher:** Wiley Publishing Company, Inc. 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

**Released:** October 2008

**Pages:** 416

\$25 USD, 30 CND, 16 GBP

**ISBN:** 9780470327258



**Strengths:** Well laid out, easy to use and in color. Price is well worth it. Authoritatively written.

**Weaknesses:** No CD. You will have to find own photos to use regarding the tutorials.

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

## Introduction

Photoshop is the premier graphics manipulation application. From humble beginnings, this program has developed into a “blockbuster,” getting better and better, adding new features over time. While there are many graphics programs that can do some of the tasks, Photoshop CS4 offers most power and flexibility for the graphic novice, intermediate and professionals. Graphic editors who use Photoshop will find this book useful for a variety of reasons.

The author is Photoshop World Dream Team Instructor and is the author of graphic books, a host for video training titles and much more. His experiences in the field of graphics are displayed in this book and display his excellent style, knowledge of graphics, capable utilization of the PhotoShop program for many graphic needs. His reading style is both authoritative and informative. But there is more within the pages that assist with learning how to use Photoshop and its complexities.

Users gain a good sense of understanding through the excellent tutorials and readings. The book has 401 pages, as opposed to 396 pages in the previous version with CS3. Once again five sections and twenty chapters are highlighted. The pages and tutorials are well laid out. White space make for easy reading as the non-cramped text is very easy to read. Photos and illustrations are in full color.

Tutorials are aided by bold titles, numbered sections and steps. Like many of the dummies books, there are icons, which highlight tips, new features, warnings, technical information, remembering important knowledge. Cartoons, which adorn each section, are both humorous and artistically cute, relate poignantly to a computer/ graphic use life, computer usage or in another way.

The sections/ parts include: Basic training (warm and friendly introduction to Photoshop from the beginning), Enhancing for Digital Images (use of color, raw images and raw plug-in, fine tuning images and dealing with problems), Creating “Art” in Photoshop (combining images, using vectors, using layer styles, text messaging, painting fun and using filters), Power Photoshop streamlining your workflow and extending CS4. Lastly, the Parts of Ten (Top 10 favorite Photoshop tips and tricks, Wacom tablet information, Ten reasons to want a digital camera).

## **Conclusions**

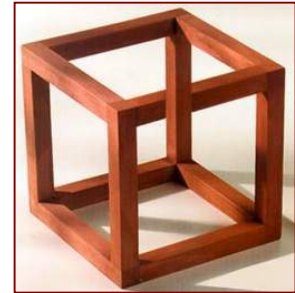
I really like this book for many reasons. For one, this book is a great buy. It is an excellent guidebook, resource guide and readable. Novice users will not “become lost”. The author communicates in concise, clear and understandable ways covering the strengths and versatility of the application. The text conveys a remarkable and easy to understand way to use Photoshop for your graphics needs.

This text will make a fine addition to graphic users library, especially to those who are in need of a fine resource/guide to learn about or upgrade skills with PhotoShop CS4. You’ll be up and running in no time and adding to your graphics capabilities and knowledge.



# Greenware

## *The Greening Continues — The most eclectic of what we read.*



By Harry Babad © 2009

Credits: Most of these items, with minor editing, were located in the newsletter *NewsBridge* of 'articles of interest' to the libraries users. It is electronically published by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, in Richland WA,.

This new column contains a mini-summary with links to articles I found interesting. Send us your favorites (no more than 2-3 sentences long) and we'll share them with our readers. Next month our Editor-In-Chief Robert L. Pritchett will join me in sharing the wealth. Much of what we will share comes from the various weekly newsletters we receive. Their selections are obviously, and intentionally biased by our views. But if you have favorites, we'll share them if they are "polite and seem factual. No science fiction please."

*Doc\_Babad [A RANT](#): In case you folks are wondering Nuclear Energy is a Green Technology. Despite propaganda and fear mongering to the contrary, it is safe. Even waster disposal is solvable, if the political NIMBY-ites get their brainwashed paradigms out of the way. Although it will never happen, I would welcome applying the new smart grid technology to be tuned to cut off 20% of the power received by every anti-nuclear advocate. Even Greenpeace and NRDC leaders and other dyed in the wool environmentalist have gotten on board.*

*This is a Democracy, no one should be forced to use nuclear power! It's a part of the base load your homes use. To be fair, the economics of nuclear power in the US is shaky since we are the only country in the world where the government does not strongly protect against loss by interveners (you folks) the long construction cycle and related upfront investments. Lose your Radiophobia, support mandated energy efficiency and if you like find a copy of my textbooks and read them. The first is being distributed free by the EnergySolutions Foundation, as will the second, which becomes available in early March.*

Now, As Usual in No Particular Order, Our Tidbits

### **The Office Kitchen: How to Enjoy Your Lunch Safely**

<http://www.exchangemagazine.com/morningpost/2008/week49/Thursday/1204010.htm>

The workplace kitchen faces challenges on a different scale than a home kitchen. There are usually more people using the kitchen, and fewer people maintaining it, although the needs remain the same. Food needs to be stored properly, dishes and surfaces need to be washed regularly, the microwave needs to be cleaned often, and the refrigerator needs to be purged and washed on a regular schedule. In additions, other articles continue to advise us to wash our hands more often than we presently do. Why? Every day we are exposed to bacteria and viruses at businesses and public facilities. Hand washing is one of the most effective things people can do to prevent the spread of germs to your family, customers, coworkers or patients.

Exchange Morning Post (Canada) 04 Dec 2008 (In part)

### **Does Daylight Saving Time Save Electricity?**

<http://www.resourceinvestor.com/pebble.asp?relid=48507>

Daylight saving time, designed for energy conservation purposes, is among the most widespread regulations on the planet. Surprisingly little evidence exists that it actually saves energy. This article, using a natural experiment, concludes that "saving" daylight has cost electricity.

The Resource Investor (VA) 06 Dec 2008

### **Three Ways Internet Crime Has Changed**

<http://www.pcworld.ca/news/column/f42fa1c7c0a8000601afd4bbb49b7c651/pg0.htm>

Gone are the days when most hackers were looking for fame with a splashy, large-scale attack on a network that made headlines. Today's cyber criminals are quietly taking over vulnerable web sites as part of an elaborate process in the underground economy.

PC World.ca (Canada) 01 Dec 2008

### **Battery Maker Bets on Silver-Zinc for Laptops**

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/02/battery-maker-is-betting-on-silver-zinc-for-laptops/>

ZPower, a company based in Camarillo, Calif., is developing a new kind of battery for consumer electronics that it says will be more powerful than lithium-ion, safer, and potentially more earth-friendly as well. The technology ZPower is banking on is called silver-zinc, which it says will provide up to 40 percent more power than a lithium-ion battery of the same size.

The New York Times 02 Dec 2008

### **Experts Working To Create a New International Standard for Energy Management** <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/story?id=54189>

Energy and sustainability experts at the Georgia Institute of Technology have taken a leadership role in the U.S. contribution to a 36-nation effort aimed at developing an international standard that would bring consistency to energy management systems worldwide. ... The U.S. Department of Energy is supporting the effort. This is important because using a unified energy management system standard establishes a culture of continual improvement to sustain the gains made, placing the organization in a position to realize even greater energy efficiencies and further savings.

RenewableENERGYWorld.com 03 Dec 2008

### **Noisy oceans 'threaten sea life'** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7763906.stm>

Increasing noise pollution in the world's oceans is threatening the survival of whales and dolphins, a UN-backed conference has heard. Experts say the noises sea creatures use to communicate are being drowned out by noises from commercial shipping, new military sonar and climate change.

BBC News 03 Dec 2008

### **Solar taxi' goes round the world** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7766249.stm>

A solar-powered car has arrived at the UN climate change talks in the Polish city of Poznan after a round-the-world trip covering almost 40 countries. At the wheel of the "solar taxi" was Swiss teacher Louis Palmer who made the 52,000 km (32,000 mile) 17-month trip. He said the feat proved solar power was a viable alternative to oil-based fuels and could help fight global warming. But he said the prototype would need serious modification before it could be mass-produced. Click to watch the video.

BBC News 05 Dec 2008

### **Office Cleaning Tips to Boost Your Performance** <http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/83853>

Practice Good Hygiene: You can easily catch a bug or the flu from other people who handle your telephone, computer and other items on your desk. Keep your workplace germ and dust-free and maintain good hygiene by using a spray and soft cloth to sanitize surfaces regularly. Food borne illnesses occur when a person consumes food contaminated with pathogenic bacteria, viruses or parasites. Listeria, for example, is found in soil, vegetables, and meat.

American Chronicle (CA) 04 Dec 2008

## **Boeing brews up algae, a promising fuel of the future**

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/story/560281.html>

The Boeing Co. and other aerospace companies and airlines are betting that algae, a simple organism that comes in hundreds of strains that can be genetically modified, will prove a green fuel to power jet planes. It also could be blended into diesel and gasoline and, perhaps one day, it could actually replace petroleum-based diesel and gasoline. As the infant industry organizes, algae proponents need to make their case for the same tax breaks, market incentives, loans and research and development backing that other biofuel sectors already have. Though corn and soybean growers have long lobbied in Washington, D.C., the Algal Biomass Organization is a new kid on the block.

thenewstribune.com (WA) 07 Dec 2008

## **Can Offshore Grids Solve Our Wind Power Woes?**

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/earth/4295504.html>

The U.S. Department of Energy says that offshore wind power could account for up to 20 percent of America's electricity generation by 2030. But while the United States scrambles to construct its first offshore wind farm, Europe has over two-dozen farms already, and is considering implementing huge interconnected offshore power systems. The European Commission met last month to discuss linking all the European Union countries together in a continental super-grid. No, they're not planning to spend millions (perhaps even billions) of Euros it would cost to install power lines across land borders. Europeans are looking offshore—to connect their growing supply of offshore wind power with a grid spanning the Baltic Sea, North Sea and Mediterranean Sea. Europe is well on the way to its goal of drawing 20 percent of its total energy from renewable sources by 2020. Twenty-five offshore wind farms spread between Ireland, the U.K., Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands already produce 1100 megawatts of power, and more than 20 new projects have been approved in Germany.

Popular Mechanics 11 Dec 2008

## **Ice-Tossing Turbines: Myth or Hazard?**

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/09/ice-tossing-turbines-myth-or-hazard/>

How do wind turbines fare in winter weather? ... The wind industry concedes that, as with all tall things (buildings, for example, or trees), ice and snow can build up and, eventually, fall down, creating a hazard to people and structures below. But the industry denies that "ice-throwing" - another concern surrounding wind power - is a problem. As an example... Not so well, according to one little town in England. The [Wisbech Standard](#) reports a harrowing tale in which "lumps of ice three or four feet long flew through the air" and smashed into a carpet showroom and a parking lot.

They apparently came off the spinning blades of a 410-foot-tall wind turbine. Also, A [Swiss report](#) last year, titled “Wind Turbine Ice Throw Studies in the Swiss Alps,” focused on a turbine near a ski area. That report found ice throw to be a “significant safety risk.” The most dangerous place for ice was underneath the turbine, but about 5 percent of fragments landed more than 80 meters — or 260 feet — from the turbine. Doc Sez: stay tuned, no energy solution is perfect-we need top use them all.

The New York Times 09 Dec 2008

Last but not least ... and just for fun!

VolunteerMatch Offers Tongue-in-Cheek Alternative to 12 Days of Giving

<http://www.ascribe.org/cgi-bin/ behold.pl?ascribeid=20081211.154720&time=16%2001%20PST&year=2008&public=1>

SAN FRANCISCO - With a recession eating holes in everyone's pockets, this Christmas is a critical time to make volunteering a priority - and VolunteerMatch is your resource for making change, helping others, and spreading good cheer.

AScribe Newswire 11 Dec 2008



# *Project Blue Beam Technologies and "False Christs"*

By Robert L Pritchett

We look forward to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. We prepare for it. However, we have been told that even the very elect will be fooled by false Christs. Will we be fooled too by the technology? Will you loose your basic beliefs? This would make a great movie, wouldn't it? Oh, wait...the art of deception has been mastered. Is real life stranger than fiction?

**"Project Blue Beam** is allegedly a secret [New World Order](#) and [US Government](#) project in development to simulate a "second coming" type event. This will culminate in a very large number of people being taken away into the sky as in a "rapture" type of situation." (Tinwiki.org)

Enter Serge Monast -

[http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6eks4\\_02920030406eesergemonastnom6662m23s\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6eks4_02920030406eesergemonastnom6662m23s_news).

Oh, he was eliminated and so were those who worked with him to "expose" this project a few years ago. His transcription from 1995 is quoted in part later in this article -

<http://theloneconspirators.yuku.com/forum/viewtopic/id/371>

## **NASA's Project blue beam Part 1**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkpT-gSSS54> Brooks Agnew presently lives in my neck of the woods and I interviewed with him a few months ago. He has been to one of our Alternative Energy User Group meetings. I discovered him at the Tesla Tech Conference last August. I found him to be credible. I also enjoyed his sense of humor. He knows how to keep things in perspective.

## NASA's Project blue beam Part 2

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwjZQlrw2Y>

Think mind-induction techniques perfected since the 1970s. Telepathic behavior modification. Look how easy it was to take somebody from the far left and make him the "New Messiah" of the USSA by convincing the voting population that he was the Saviour. Maybe it was something in the chemtrails (strontium barium niobate seeding) or our food...

Think HAARP. Weather modification and control. Man-made earthquakes. Apocalyptic events. [http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1195360/project\\_bluebeam\\_a\\_holographic\\_rapture\\_and\\_the\\_prophet\\_hologram/](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1195360/project_bluebeam_a_holographic_rapture_and_the_prophet_hologram/) An Israeli cybernetics expert named Yitzhaq Hayutman has gone so far as to lobby the Arab world to allow him to project a holographic temple above the dome of the rock in an effort to summon which ever savior should take notice and show up.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJ8OY6LM2XU> Chris and Janet Morris and Holographic Imagery Technology.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ0pEUqZ0c8> Think putting on a good show. Have you been to a laser light presentation lately? Freaking awesome! Can we replicate it on a Mac? Not all of it.

Think Psyops - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological\\_operations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_operations) "Capture their minds and their hearts and souls will follow."

[http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/4404/PROJECT\\_BLUE\\_BEAM/](http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/4404/PROJECT_BLUE_BEAM/)

The "BLUE BEAM PROJECT" will pretend to be the universal fulfillment of the prophecies of old; as major an event as that which took place 2,000 years ago. In principle, it will make use of the sky as a holographic projection screen for space-based laser-generating satellites (star wars). These projectors will project simultaneous images to the four corners of the planet, in every language by region. It deals with the religious aspect of the NEW WORLD ORDER. The "BLUE BEAM PROJECT" will pretend to be the universal fulfillment of the prophecies of old; as major an event as that which took place 2000 years ago. In principle, it will make use of the sky as a holographic projection screen for space-based laser-generating satellites (star wars). These projectors will project simultaneous images to the four corners of the planet, in every language by region. It deals with the religious aspect of the NEW WORLD ORDER.

Specifically, the "show" will consist of laser projections of multiple holographic images to different parts of the planet, each receiving different images according to the predominating regional religious faith. Not a single area will be excluded. With computer animation and sound effects appearing to come from the depths of space, astonished followers of the various creeds will witness their own returned Messiah in spectacularly convincing lifelike realness.

The various images of Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Krishna, etc., will merge into ONE after "correct explanation" of the mysteries, prophecies and revelations are disclosed. This "ONE GOD" will in fact function as the "Anti-Christ", who will "explain" that the various scriptures "have been misunderstood"- that the religious of old are responsible for turning brother against brother, nation against nation - that the religions of the world must be abolished to make way for the GOLDEN AGE (NEW AGE) of the One World Religion, representing the One God they see before them.

But before all this, they have to go through four different steps in order to get to Project Blue Beam.

1: The first step concerns the breakdown of all archeological knowledge. It deals with staging earthquakes at certain precise locations around the planet where supposed new "discoveries" will finally explain (for them) that the meanings of the basic doctrines of all the world's major religions are "wrong". This falsification will be used to make the population believe that all religious doctrine has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. The falsification started with the film 2001: A Space Odyssey, the TV-series STAR TREK, the STAR WARS films, E.T., all of which deal with space "invasion" and "protection". JURASSIC PARK, was to push the theory of evolution.

2: The second step deals with the gigantic space show: 3D optical holograms and sounds, laser projections of multiple holographic images in different parts of the world, each receiving a different image, according to its predetermined original national religious faith. This new "god" image will talk in all languages. As an example, the Soviets have manufactured the advanced computers and have programmed them with the minute psychological particles based upon their studies of the anatomy and biology of the human body, as well as their studies on the anatomy, chemistry and electricity of the human brain. These computers have also been fed with the different languages of the world.

There are two different aspects of step two. The first is the "space show." Where does the space show come from? The space show, the holographic images will be used in a simulation of the ending during which all nations will be shown scenes which will be the fulfillment of that which they desire to verify the prophecies and adversary events. These will be projected from satellites onto the sodium layer about 60 miles above the earth. We see tests every once in a while, but they are called UFOs and "flying saucers." The result of these deliberately staged events will be to show the world the new "christ," the new messiah, Matreya, for the immediate implementation of the new world religion. Enough truth will be foisted upon an unsuspecting world to hook them into the lie. "Even the most learned will be deceived." The project has perfected the ability for some device to lift up an enormous number of people, as in a rapture, and whisk the entire group into a never-never land. We see tests of this device in the abduction of humans by those mysterious little alien greys who snatch people out of their beds and through windows into waiting "mother ships."



The calculated resistance to the universal religion and the New Messiah and the ensuing holy wars will result in the loss of human life on a scale never imagine before in all of human history. The Blue Beam Project will pretend to be the universal fulfillment of the prophecies of old, as major an event as that which occurred 2,000 years ago. In principle, it will make use of the skies as a movie screen (on the sodium layer at about 60 miles) as space-based laser-generating satellites project simultaneous images to the four corners of the planet in every language and dialect according to the region. It deals with the religious aspect of the new world order and is deception and seduction on a massive scale. Computers will coordinate the satellites and software already in place will run the sky show.

Holographic images are based on nearly identical signals combining to produce an image or hologram with deep perspective, which is equally applicable to acoustic ELF, VLF and LF waves and optical phenomena. Specifically, the show will consist of multiple holographic images to different parts of the world, each receiving a different image according to the specific national, regional religion. Not a single area will be excluded. With computer animation and sounds appearing to emanate from the very depths of space, astonished ardent followers of the various creeds will witness their own returned Messiahs in convincing lifelike reality. Then the projections of Jesus, Mohammed, Buddah, Krishna, etc., will merge into one after correct explanations of the mysteries and revelations will have been disclosed. This one god will, in fact, be the antichrist, who will explain that the various scriptures have been misunderstood and misinterpreted, and that the religions of old are responsible for turning brother against brother, and nation against nation, therefore old religions must be abolished to make way for the new age new world religion, representing the one god antichrist they see before them.

Naturally, this superbly staged falsification will result in dissolved social and religious disorder on a grand scale, each nation blaming the other for the deception, setting loose millions of programmed religious fanatics through demonic possession on a scale never witnessed before.

In addition, this event will occur at a time of profound worldwide political anarchy and general tumult created by some worldwide catastrophe. The United Nation even now plans to use Beethoven's "Song of Joy" as the anthem for the introduction for the new age one world religion. If we put this space show in parallel with the star wars program we get this: combination of electromagnetic radiation and hypnosis have also been the subject of intensive research. In 1974, for instance, researcher G. F. Shapits, said of one of the research proposals that, "...in this investigation it will be shown that the spoken words of the hypnotist may also be converted by electromagnetic energy directly and to the subconscious part of the human brain without employing any mechanical device for receiving or transcoding the message, and without the person exposed to such influence having a chance to control the information input consciously. It may be expected that the rationalized behavior will be considered to have been taken out of their own free will."

Anyone investigating so-called "channelling" phenomena right now would be wise to take this area of research into consideration. It will be noted that those who think of themselves as "channellers" has escalated rapidly since this type of research was conducted. It is uncanny how similar their messages are, despite which entity they claim to be their source of divine guidance.

It would suggest any individual considering the credibility of channelled information should be discerning and critically evaluate where the message they are receiving originates, and if the messages are specifically beneficially to the new world order. The Sydney Morning newspaper published an item on March 21st, 1983 which announced that the Soviets were invading the human mind, the article having been submitted to the foreign editor by Doctor Nathan Abnuengy, assistant professor in the faculty of agriculture in Asia. It is worth quoting the article at length even though his grammar is a little old. This article relates to the Soviets who created the supercomputer we were discussing earlier and which is really important because these types of computers can be run through satellites and through space. The computers were fed with all the different languages and their meanings, the dialect of all peoples were fed to the computers with objective programs. But we are no longer talking about the Soviets; we are talking about the United Nations, the minions of the new world order, who are feeding the computers with the necessary information.

3: The third step deals with telepathic electronic two-way communication, where ELF (Extra Low Frequency), VLF (Very Low Frequency), and LF (Low Frequency) waves will reach the people of the earth through the insides of their brains, making each person believe that his own God is speaking to him from within his own soul. Such rays, from satellite, are fed from the memory of computers that store much data about the human being and his languages. These rays will then interlace and interweave with the natural thinking processes to form what we call the ARTIFICIAL TALK.

4: The fourth step involves universal supernatural manifestations using electronic means. This step contains three different orientations: The first one is to make mankind believe that an alien invasion is about to occur upon every major city on the earth. This is to push each major nation into using its nuclear capability to strike back. In this manner, it would put each of these nations in a state of full disarmament before the United Nations after the false attack. The second is to make the "christian" believe that a major rapture is occurring, with a simple "played" divine intervention of an alleged "good" alien force coming to save the good people from a brutal satanic attack. Its goal is to get rid of all significant opposition to the NEW WORLD ORDER. The third orientation is a mixture of electronic and supernatural forces. The waves (frequencies) used at that time will allow supernatural forces to travel through fiber optics cable, coaxial cable, electric and telephone lines in order to penetrate all electronic equipment and appliances that will by then all have a special microchip installed. The goal of this step deals with the materialization of satanic ghosts, spectres, and poltergeists all across the globe in order to push all populations to the edge of a wave of suicide, killing and permanent psychological disorder. After that night of the THOUSAND STARS, HUMANITY IS BELIEVED TO BE READY FOR THEM TO ENTER IN A "NEW MESSIAH" TO REESTABLISH PEACE EVERYWHERE AT ANY COST, EVEN AT THE COST OF FREEDOM.'

So now that you now the script, the players and the program, are you going to participate in it or know how to avoid it and wait until the real Messiah comes to earth in glory in His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming? Will you live close to the Holy Spirit so you can get real promptings, instead of listening to electronically-induced projections? And how about those satellite-induced up-in-the-sky projections? Will you fall for it or wait for the real thing? Don't be seduced by technology.

## References

### Project Blue Beam

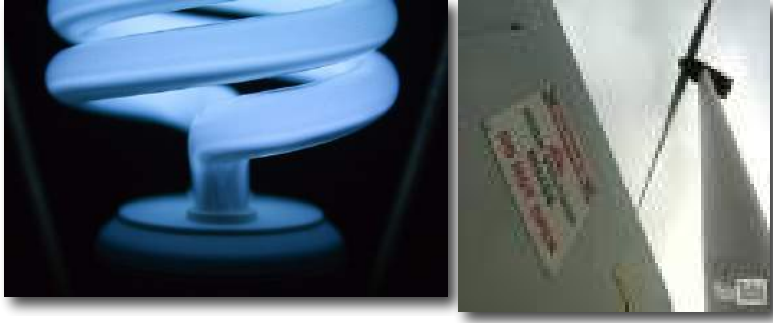
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/national/dotmil/arkin020199.htm>  
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[http://www.disclose.tv/members/action/viewvideo/2715/STEWART\\_SWERDLOW\\_on\\_DRACONIAN\\_History\\_pt\\_7/](http://www.disclose.tv/members/action/viewvideo/2715/STEWART_SWERDLOW_on_DRACONIAN_History_pt_7/)  
<http://portland.indymedia.org/en/2005/01/309308.shtml>

### Mind Control

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project\\_MKULTRA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_MKULTRA)  
<http://www.mindspring.com/~txporter/sec3.htm>  
<http://www.hiddenmysteries.com/freebook/mk/>  
[!! http://www.mindcontrolforums.com/jewell.htm](http://www.mindcontrolforums.com/jewell.htm) - Very interesting read on US Presidency.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i46RI2twVao> - Psychological Warfare

### Psyops

<http://www.psywarrior.com/>  
<http://www.specialoperations.com/Army/PSYOP/default.html>  
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/army/4psyopgp.htm>  
<http://batr.org/psyops.html> - Includes how NSA access was built into MS Windows.  
[http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.04/holyland.html?tw=wn\\_tophead\\_4](http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.04/holyland.html?tw=wn_tophead_4)



## *The Law of Unintended Consequences – CFLs and Wind Turbines*

By Robert Pritchett

Let me guess, you too bought compact fluorescents (CFLs), believing they were economically more efficient, despite the price and would last a long, long time (justifying the price difference between them and incandescents). You ignored the warnings regarding the mercury and cleanup issues if they broke. I only bought about 30 of these CFL things and loaded the house with them.

Well, now we have learned by sad experience just how damaging these light electronic bulbs are to our bodies. Ever since we installed them a few months ago, we have all been experiencing severe headaches (migraines), body aches with arthritic-like symptoms and my wife even developed a rash on her upper torso. Our daughter who is still living with us also started suffering from arthritic pain. We could not figure out what was going on.

My wife and our other daughter who left (recently married off), both said they didn't like the lights, because of the light they gave off. That should have been a clue. We should listen to our bodies more closely.

<http://vodpod.com/watch/1270032-just-how-safe-are-cfl-light-bulbs>

Not mentioned in the video is that CFLs do not function well in cold weather. Below a certain temperature, they do not work at all.

And they cost more to operate even though they pretend to use less power to give off more light. Don't believe me? Read Steve Windisch' article –  
[http://peswiki.com/index.php/Article:Are\\_CFL%27s\\_Designed\\_to\\_Make\\_Us\\_Pay\\_More\\_on\\_Our\\_Power\\_Bills](http://peswiki.com/index.php/Article:Are_CFL%27s_Designed_to_Make_Us_Pay_More_on_Our_Power_Bills)

Anyway, immediately after watching the "Just how safe are CFL light bulbs?" video, I replaced all the CFL bulbs, doing an exchange at Home Depot and going back to incandescents. If you did the CFL swapout, I hope you kept the packaging. By the way, 2 of the CFLs had already burned out. So much for the 7-year life. (I love doing business with Home Depot. They always respond positively. We were fully reimbursed. The local store is now aware of the health issues surrounding CFLs.)

After watching the video, my wife feels exonerated and vindicated in her feelings about the electronic bulbs and our daughter who got married, said that was a good decision to swap them out. Good health requires drastic measures sometimes.

The cheap CFLs, according to the video, may save electricity, may be "eco-green", but they apparently are very "dirty" in spreading electric frequencies not conducive to human well-being (migraines) and in distributing UV light (acting like direct sunlight), causing skin rashes.

Once again, we've been sold a bill of goods by the "environ-**mental**-ists" and it has cost us dearly in pain, suffering and otherwise unnecessary medical bills. Thanks for nothing. A pox on your collective "enviro-green" heads, feh!

So if you do use CFLs, what can you do if you can't return them for a refund? Keep them away from your vicinity (i.e. reading desk, anywhere you work) for extended periods of time. CFLs that are packaged in an outer "bulb" so they look like "normal" incandescence apparently do not emit UV light. But they still produce "dirty" electricity at frequencies that give us headaches. Bottom line, don't use them. And don't believe the manufacturers who will claim they are safe or the environmentalists who have pushed our governments to ban incandescents by 2012 from being manufactured in the UK and 2014 in the US.

<http://www.ecogeek.org/content/view/2212/74/>

When I told my wife about the newer LED lights, she said that in time, they probably will be found to cause diarrhea. ;^)

See also

[http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Compact\\_Fluorescent\\_Lighting\\_%28CFL%29\\_Downsides](http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Compact_Fluorescent_Lighting_%28CFL%29_Downsides)

Another link I posted, relates to the fact that about half the folks that live near wind turbines get very ill, can't sleep due to the noise and have to move away to get their lives back to normal.

<http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Wind#Cautions>

Apparently the propellers cause a strobe-effect during the day. The turbines also create "dirty" electricity causing nausea, disorientation and migraines, etc. Think of commercial wind turbines as large CFLs and you get the picture.

<http://nosydenhamwindfarm.wordpress.com/2009/01/19/world-renowned-expert-issues-dire-warnings-to-residents-of-ontario/>

So far I have not seen where commercial wind turbines do much more than zero-sum, due to property value decreases, poor return on investment, high maintenance, short life spans, an average performance of around 15% and not 60% as advertised and in many cases an infrastructure connectivity to the grid that so far has not paid for itself either. And the subsidies (tax-payer pays) and carbon credit expenses (Al Gore gets rich) are off the charts. Commercial wind turbines are not "environmentally friendly".

Who knew? Now you do.

More Reading

The left's own Punxsutawney Phil brings more hot air to a chilly Washington

<http://www.businessandmedia.org/commentary/2009/20090127125737.aspx>

# Hardware

## Plugz Earpollution Earplugs

Reviewed by Michele Patterson



ifrogz™ Inc.

<http://ifrogz.com/proddetail.php?prod=EPPlugz>

953 West 700 North Suite 107

Logan, UT 84321

Toll Free: 1-877-443-7641

Fax: 435-753-2332

Contact form: <http://ifrogz.com/contact.php>

**Released:** November 5, 2008

\$14.99

**Store:** <http://ifrogz.com>

**Requirements:** iPod, stereo & ears



**Comes with:** headset

**Strengths:** Good sound quality, low price, interchangeable ear plugs to fit different size ears.

**Weaknesses:** Does not wrap around ears.

### Introduction

Earpollution Plugz reduce ambient noise, have good sound quality at low levels and are comfortable to wear. The plugz come with various earfit pieces but they are thin and fragile, so you'll have to be careful switching them out. The cord feels fragile and I wouldn't suggest running them through your sleeve for jogging, it could tear and you'll be without tunes for your jog. All in all they are good for the price and with the ultra hip logo and color choices the Earpollution Plugz are a decent gift for those who are casual listeners of melodic and smooth music.

## **Features**

Driver Unit: 9mm

Impedance: 16 ohms

Sensitivity: 98dB+/-3dB at 1 KHz

Frequency Response: 30Hz to 20 KHz

Cord Length: 1M

Plug: 3.5 mm

## **What I Learned**

I like the Earpollution Plugz, the colors are stylish and they didn't hurt my ear canal. They fit well and since I don't turn up the music, the sound quality was decent. After sampling some Rap I was sourly disappointed and do not advise listening to anything with thumping bass.

## **Conclusion**

Overall for the low price your going to get what you pay for, typical ear bud type sound, but with this product they'll fit.



# Throwbax Earpollution Headphones

Reviewed by Michele Patterson



ifrogz™ Inc.

<http://ifrogz.com/proddetail.php?prod=EPThrowBax>

953 West 700 North Suite 107

Logan, UT 84321

Toll Free: 1-877-443-7641

Fax: 435-753-2332

Contact form: <http://ifrogz.com/contact.php>

Released: November 5, 2008

\$30 USD

Store: <http://ifrogz.com>

Requirements: iPod, stereo & ears

Comes with: headset



**Strengths:** Good noise reduction, nice bass at low levels and stylish look.

**Weaknesses:** feels flimsy and bass tops out at tops levels causing cracking noises.

**Other Reviews:** <http://drbott.com/prod/db.lasso?code=1948-ETBO>

## Introduction

Throwbax Earpollution headphones are old school style and retro price. I was surprised at how comfortable and light weight they were when I put them on and even more pleased at the decent sound quality.

## Features:

Driver Unit: 40mm

Impedance: 32 ohms

Sensitivity: 108dB+/-3dB

Frequency Response: 5Hz to 20 KHz

Cord Length: 1.2M

Plug: 3.5 mm

## **What I Learned**

For general use blocking out ambient noise while listening to music and working, these headphones worked quite well. I was excited to try some bass on these, as every article I have read states, “deep rich bass”, but honestly, I didn’t get that. I got a good bass that topped out at high levels and cracked.

## **Conclusion**

However they performed well and look great thus I would recommend them to the everyday listener, but not to the serious music lover.

# iFrogz Toxic Earpollution

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



BLASTmedia  
11313 USA Parkway  
Suite B-302  
Fishers, IN 46037  
P 317.806.1900 x 115  
F 317.806.1422

<http://ifrogz.com/earpollution/>  
<http://ifrogz.com/proddetail.php?prod=EPToxic>  
\$20 USD

**Strengths:** They come in a variety of colors. Great prices. Extremely fashionable. Stylish and good looking. High fidelity sound at a good price. Over the ear models are very light and comfortable. Earbuds and other styles as well.

**Weaknesses:** Not as clear on the vocalization part (based on my iTunes setting) but pretty good though.



## Introduction

I have had all types of earphones over the years. While I don't own an iPod, I've used earphones extensively with my iMac computer and iTunes, on my laptop and on jets. I am not an "earbud person" but prefer the "on the ear fit" because for me, these feel more comfortable. When I look for a good earphone, I look for ones that are comfortable, light weight, have good fidelity and are good the price. Well I am happy to say that all these factors are in the excellent category.

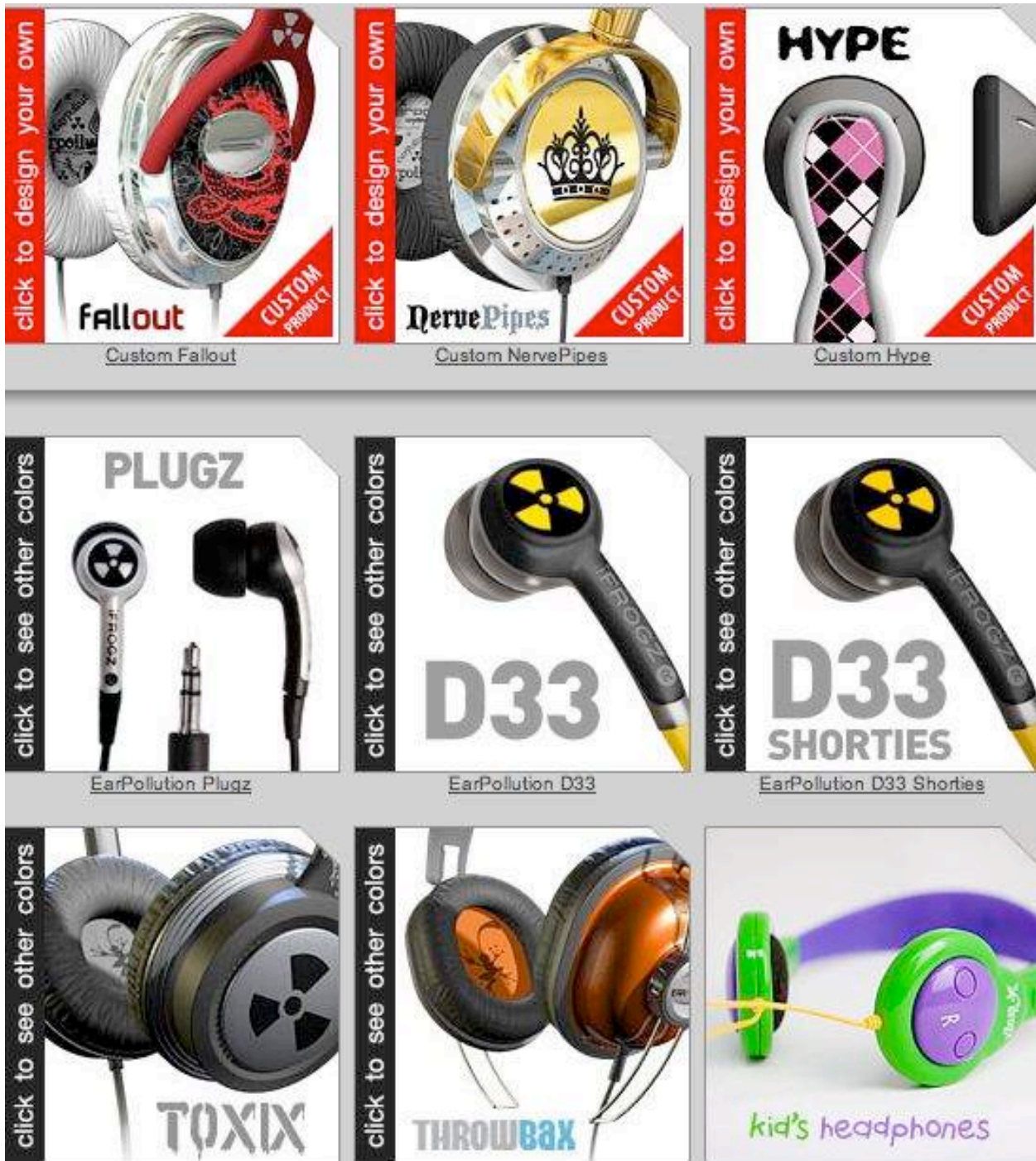
I heard about these new iFrogz Earpollution line of earphones which launched in November 2008 (before then, iFrogz only offered the D-33 earbuds, but no other earbuds/headphones). Based in Logan, Utah, it is a leading developer of accessories for iPod™ and other consumer electronics with the expressed intent to individualize the look of music lovers iPods and additional music related devices. EarPollution is the name for the new features which include three different types of headphones: earbud, on-the-ear and DJ-style.

These are currently available online and in retail stores and there are different types to choose from to meet your needs. These affordable earphones come in a variety of fashionable colors (silver, gold etc). Each type of headphone in the new EarPollution line features three or more different styles that vary in function as well as look. All of the new headphone styles give crisp, clean stereo sound.

Providing unique styles have been a trade mark of this company's designs of accessories. There are three types of Earbuds: D33 – Noise isolating with a snug, secure fit and rich, deep sound. Each package includes three ear fits and a convenient travel case; Plugz – Noise isolating headphones that provide a crisp sound and the comfort of direct-to-ear delivery. Each pair includes three ear fit pieces; Metal Drumz – Noise isolation with a sleek metal direct-to-ear delivery. Each set features clean stereo 20 sound and dynamic bass. I am not an earbud fan and so I let my wife test those out. (She liked the fit).

There are several option/characteristics for the earphones that make them highly desirable for use with iPods, MP3 players, for music, listening and other activities.





Earbud style earphones includes the following;

D33 (\$19.95) are noise isolating with a comfortable, secure fit and give a rich, deep sound. Each package includes three ear fits and a convenient travel case.

Plugz (\$14.95) are noise isolating headphones that provide a crisp sound and the comfort of direct-to-ear delivery. Each pair includes three ear fit pieces.

Metal Drumz include noise isolation within a sleek metal direct-to-ear delivery. Each set features clean stereo sound and dynamic bass. The speaker is wrapped with a chrome accent and each 3.5mm jack is encased in a stylish metal sleeve.

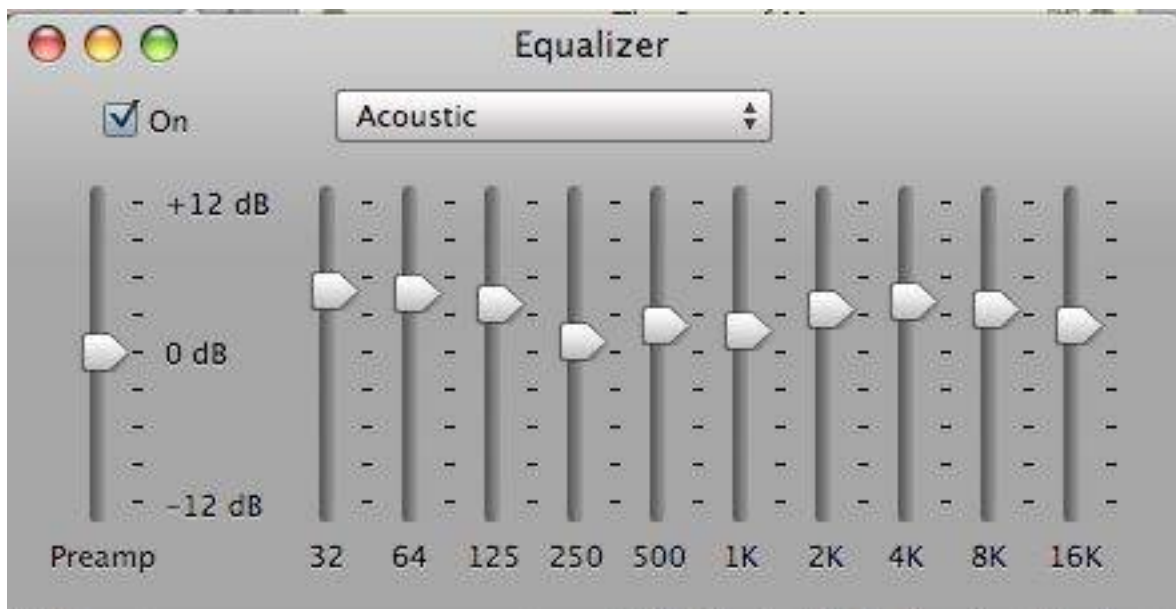
On-the-ear has these features.

Toxix (\$19.99)– Stereo headphones offering a stylish and comfortable fit. I particularly like the way they are adjustable to fit your ears and the way I wanted them to fit around the padded phones. I liked the simple grey fashion color.

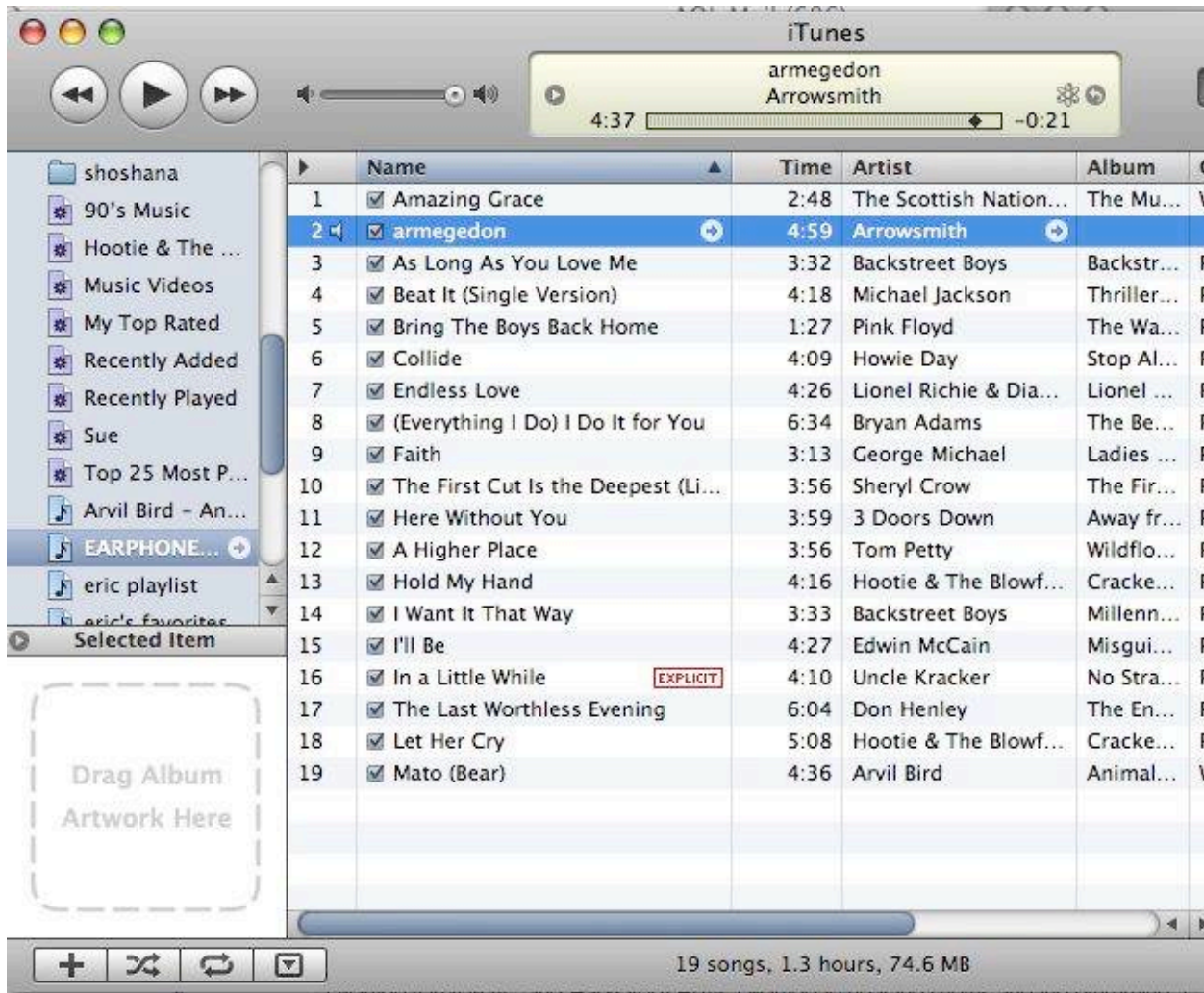
ThrowBax (\$29.95) – Offer a little more options and are stylish, retro design and comfortable with a fit which yield a deep bass and smooth stereo. Metallic coated speaker cups easily adjust for a perfect fit along the metal side rails. Each pair also features padded ear cups for extra comfort and noise isolation.

Nerve Pipes – Feature chrome multihued accents and contrasting color. Comfort cushion ear cups, a foldable headband and rotational hinges adjust for the perfect fit. Each pair offers deep rich bass and smooth stereo sound.

Fallout – A traditional fit offering smooth tones and dynamic bass. Each pair features comfortable cushion ear cups for extra noise isolation, chrome accents and contrasting color.



I don't have the expensive top of the line Bose acoustic ear canceling headphones, which is supposed to be (one of) the best so I can't provide a direct comparison. However I did a lot of research and bought the popular Sony noise canceling headphones MDR-NC6 (which at that time were a little more than 2 times the price of these). These have a slight thin padding over the ear cups while the earplugs don't have a pad over the top. I would compare these to the Toxix earphones with the nice inner reservoir which contrasted with the Sony's fit of a padding over the reservoir. The Sony also uses a battery that can turn off/on the noise canceling. This is on the right side of the headphone while the ear jack connects to the left side. The Toxix also has this configuration with the ear jack on the left (seeing which one is left/right is a little more difficult to see but is evident after I looked more closely).



I am not a musician by any means. I only can do a little dabbling with piano and that's it. My children are much more musically inclined and know more than I do about music. They know and hear the subtle parts of music, instruments and harmony when they play their instruments and listen to their music on their iPods. I enjoy music and the musical scores that are my favorites. So I have to go with my what I hear.

I also have to admit that I wear hearing aids because I have lost some of the "high end noise" capabilities. I use hearing aids mostly when working with students in the classrooms and in public. When I listen to music, it is 90% of the time with headphones on my iMac. I can hear the subtle sounds and basically am focusing on the music now and what pleases my ears and the sounds I expect to hear when I listen to my music. I don't use the hearing aids when I listen to the music with the earphones. I am hearing what comes to me through the headphones.

I had to set up a way to test the earphones while playing my music on my iMac and my iTunes. I chose 19 of my songs and put them on a playlist and then whittled the list down to one song to compare for this review. That one that I selected for the final decision was Arrowsmith's Armageddon because of the musical score, voice accentuation and the full range of instruments employed.

Basically to test the fidelity, I made the following settings on my iTunes by first setting my iTunes to the following:

iTunes > Windows (setting) > Equalizer > Acoustics.

I put the earphones to the test by listening to my favorite (no snickers please) music that I enjoy and felt would highlight the different instruments, music and voices to compare and contrast. I listened to a range of ones that I liked for this testing playlisting. I then compared these to my other earphones.

I finally narrowed it down to one song to test Arrowsmith's Armageddon. This song has the drumming in the background and with the music flashing back and forth between the different sides of the headphones. Full range of orchestra instruments to listen to and "zone in on". I wanted to see whether the earphones would transmit certain sounds that I expect to hear. The tingling of the triangle instrument in the background near the end, the vocalization, the violins and more. Then I rated the song by listening through the earphones alternating each pair and then trying to decipher and write down the differences if any. I did this 10 times for each headphone for this Armageddon song.

## **Conclusions**

This was tough as they are both good models. I basically was evaluating the earphones on three characteristics that I selected as I felt these are what and most people look for when they order/buy headphones.

(1) Style and comfort: Toxix 10/10 (exceptional) with Sony 9/10 (good).

For style, the iFrogz are more stylish and have more colors. These headphones are light, smart looking and are versatile. The ear buds have different parts to them which create even more comfort. Each pair also features comfort cushion ear cups. They both were adjustable although the Sony's were a little easier to adjust as the track was not as "sticky". Comparing I give the Toxix 10/10 to the Sony functional not splashy but nice 8/10.



The Toxix are little lighter but I really like the padding with the Sony. While that makes them slightly heavier they are very comfortable and I love them too. Hard to decide but the edge goes to Toxix.

(2) Fidelity: Toxix 9/10 (exceptional) with Sony 10/10 (good).

Sony I could hear that the piano was a little cleaner. I noticed with the drums blending in really clearly. With the Sony, I could hear the subtle low piano sounds in the background in the beginning and then followed later with the drums over it with the choral instruments. There is a tingling instrumental in the background as the words flow along. I could hear the tingling trailing off in the end. The violin with a little clearer. More music was coming out of the left ear. Lots of the tingling in the background which was very clear and distinct. Not as much base. I felt that the sound resonating from the reservoir made it more melodic. There seemed to be less bass sound and much more of the subtle instruments in the background and I could hear the bugle like instruments clearly. The tingling triangle was there at times throughout. There was a lot of resonance back and forth with the two sides of my headphone. The violins were really melodic and stretched and you could hear the violins going all the way until they lowered and died out. It took many trials but I noticed that the vocalization was very clean. It melded with the symphonic sounds well.

I felt that the Toxix had more base sounds in the beginning. The piano was really evident in the beginning and was a little cleaner with the drums and the violin in the beginning. Some of the sounds were a little shrill. There was a lot of blending of the instruments. Horns were in the background. I could hear the tingling and could hear the violins in the background. The piano sounds were clear. I seem to notice the bugle type instruments better. I could hear the "tingling triangle sounds" but it was a little muted. Had a little more base throughout. I liked the stereophonic blending between and back and forth both sides. The instruments in the background were not as evident. In the end the music trailed off with the triangle blending. I finally targeted that the vocalization was definitely not as clean.

This was really tough. The headphones are both tremendous and sounded great. It took 10 trials to find out which had a edge. The edge in fidelity goes to Sony because the vocalization was much cleaner. The lead singer had a much clearer tone even when it seemed like he was "screaming". It sounded less "hoarse".

(3) Price (for performance): Toxix 10/10 (exceptional) with Sony 8/10 (good).

So the final tally is Toxix (29/30) to Sony (27/30). But your tally might depend on your musical needs and more.

There are many reasons to buy one headphone over another. I chose my three top preferences. What I like is that both these earphones provide the music that is very engaged and easy for listening. They are both comfortable with little differences between the two. With the Toxix, being lighter, I almost forget I am wearing them. In fact, if they have a model someday that is not tethered to the device, these might be ideal. The Sony is a little cleaner sounding with the vocalization.

If I would fly on a jet as I will do soon, I will take the Sony because of the noise cancellation capabilities to test those and possibly compare to these at that time. But that's in the future.

Lastly, both earphones are great sounding but the edge may go with you if you prefer different colors and styles. Check out the Toxix earphones are great buy for the price, acoustics and their styles. They would go well with any music device, many iPod/ MP3 player colors . If I were you, I would run out, find them, try them out and/or buy them. I think you will be as glad as I am. Plus I did not have to "break my bank" to hear some cool, soothing music!

# OtterBox Defender for iPod touch 2nd generation Defender Series™

Reviewed by Ted Bade



Otterbox

<http://www.otterbox.com/ipod-cases/ipod-touch-2nd-gen-defender-case/>

**Released:** Dec. 12, 2008

\$30 USD

**Strengths:** Great protection, includes protection for screen, solid construction.

**Weaknesses:** Cosmetic issue with membrane covering the iPod's screen, the screen membrane is not replaceable.

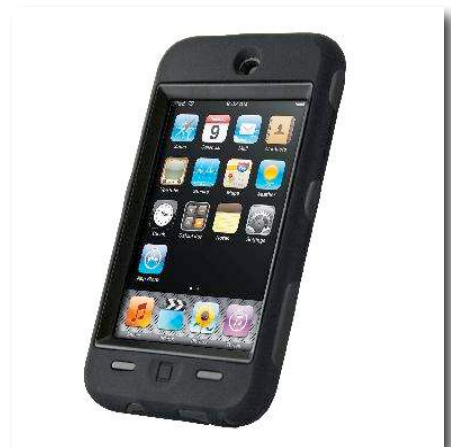


The OtterBox for iPod touch 2nd generation Defender Series™ designed by Otterbox specifically for the second generation iPod Touch. As would be expected from OtterBox, this case provides superb protection and style.

OtterBox makes various cases for a variety of portable devices. Their cases generally add extra degrees of protection, beyond that offered by the average case, while not sacrificing style. The Defender series fits this description.

The Defender series case is the mid-range case for the Gen 2 iPod Touch. The case consists of a polycarbonate shell covered with a easily gripped silicone covering. This case includes a clear membrane that covers and protects the Touch's screen while still allowing full control and use of the iPod. The case is available in black only.

This case fits over the iPod by separating the two halves of the polycarbonate underpart (The top part with the membrane and the more solid bottom part.), then putting the iPod between them. The two pieces lock together. A silicone based outer cover is then pulled over the inner shell. Disassembly is a bit trickier, trying to locate where on the tabs one inserts a fingernail to pop the pieces apart. Luckily, one doesn't need to do this often or at all once the iPod is safely in the case.



The case is designed to protect the Touch from falls, bumps, and shocks. I have to admit, I didn't try out this feature, although I came close a couple of times ☺. I did toss the empty case around a bit, and it took that abuse quite well.

There are flaps in the bottom of the case that protect the openings for the headphones and the data connector. The flaps need to be held aside to make the connections. There is a raised area on the top of the case that sits over the on-off button, and a similar one over the Home button on the front, both protect these controls from the environment while still making it easy to use them. A hole in the back of the case allows one to view the Apple logo on the back of the Touch.

Day to day use of the iPod Touch was relatively easy while it was in this case. I had no issues accessing the touch screen control through the Patented OtterBox membrane. (I did have one cosmetic issue with the membrane.)



We didn't like dealing with the flaps that protect the data connection on the bottom. The flap itself gets in the way as you try to insert the connector. We had less an issue with the headphone connector, although it was still annoying. However, one needs to weigh the protective functions of these flaps that will help reduce the amount of dirt and debris that will eventually work their way into the iPod, over the issues of dealing with them. Every other case I have tried simply leaves these ports open to the environment.

For some reason, air pockets formed between the membrane and the Touch's screen. With the screen off the Touch looked a little sickly. While this effect fades a bit when the screen is on, I was still bothered by the distortions caused by the bubbles. A suggestion to resolve this issue was to get some skin oil on the screen. Sounds weird, but they suggested we rub the iPod screen on a cheek to transfer oils onto it. While doing this improved the issue, it didn't completely resolve it. (Perhaps we are too dry in these winter months). Conceptually, I like the fact that Otter Box provides a protective membrane over the iPod's screen. Cosmetically, this just didn't work well for us.

Another issue I had with the membrane cover is that it is not replaceable. Once this membrane gets scratched, the entire case really needs to be replaced. Most other cases just leave the screen area uncovered, giving the user the ability to attach an inexpensive easily replaceable screen cover to take all the direct contact. The OtterBox membrane is definitely much more solid and protective than the inexpensive covers I have tried. So it all boils down to how you use your Touch. A \$30 case to protect the screen of your \$300 to \$400 device, isn't that great an expense, especially if normal day to day use of the iPod puts the screen at risk.

I found that the case's raised buttons made it easy to access the home and power buttons of the Touch. I also liked the sleek style of the case. Ridges on the outside of the case back and sides

add an interesting style to the case, add strength and shock resistance, as well as making it easier to grip the case. Which in turn help reduce the accidental dropping of the Touch in the first place. However, the silicone material was a bit more slippery than other silicone cases I tried.

## **Conclusion**

Overall the Defender Series™ iPod Case is a good choice. It provides more mechanical protection than any other case I have tried, because of both the polycarbonate shell and the membrane that protects the screen. It also protects the openings in the iPod with flaps on the outer silicone case, something I don't think any other case I have seen does. (Most cases just leave this area open). The Defender is a good choice to protect your iPod Touch 2nd generation.

# Software

## Cocktail 4.2.2 Maintenance Utility

Reviewed by Ted Bade

Maintain

<http://www.maintain.se>

Single user 15\$ USD, or \$30 for Family License

<http://www.maintain.se/cocktail/buy.php>

**Released:** Dec. 18, 2008

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.5 or later; Universal binary.

**Other Reviews:** <http://macrecon.com/software-review-cocktail/>



**Strengths:** Easy access to many system related features and maintenance scripts. Good help files, they do a good job of explaining some of the more esoteric features

**Weaknesses:** Some content is on the geeky side.

Download: <http://www.maintain.se/cocktail/download.php>

### Introduction

Cocktail is a program that provides easy access to a wide variety of maintenance routines needed to keep your Mac running in tip-top condition. It is a great program and definitely worth a serious look.

Cocktail's interface is pretty simple, there are several tabs each relating to a specific aspect of the Mac system. Opening any section provides various choices, select a choice and run the process.

Since this program can affect important Mac OS X system functions, you will need to provide an administrative password before it can start. This means that only an administrative level account can actually use this program. This is important, especially if your Mac has several people using it of all different expertise levels. Some of the items that Cocktail makes available could cause some problems if applied incorrectly. As with any program like this, if you don't understand what is going to happen, don't do it until you do.

Cocktail has five different sections to affect your computer as well as one section used to create a suite of functions and run them manually or automatically on a schedule. The best way to understand what this program does is to look at each of these sections.



(Looks like this drive is FULL - luckily that is my Time Machine drive)

The first section is labeled “Disks”. Obviously this section does things that pertain to the Mac’s disk drives. If you click on the Disks tab a window opens with four sub-sections.

Journaling - The journaling tab lets you select from all the drives connected to your Macintosh, turn Journaling on or off, and provides a bar graph with text showing how much of the selected drive’s space is used/free. As you may know, Journaling helps maintain the integrity of drive data after a power outage (see the Apple Journaling document - <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT2355> for more information). Knowing the free space on a hard drive is important. If you don’t have enough, the Mac will start acting weird. I have a friend whose family shared Mac began acting up. It turned out that he had only 1 GByte free on the hard drive. While this seems like a lot of space, it isn’t enough for today’s Mac!

- Permissions - This tab lets you repair permissions. Surely you can access this function using Apple’s drive utility. However, Cocktail will let you schedule this to be run automatically at regular intervals. That is the best part of it.
- Sleep - This tab allows one to control drive sleep options as well as some other sleep options for laptop Macs.
- Misc - Most of Cocktail’s section include a “Misc” section, containing items that relate to the section but not to any of the sub sections. In the drives section you can select to Mount external disks without user login and to disable the Motion Sensor feature of later model Mac laptops. (But why?)



*(Careful, don't change to a language you cannot understand!)*

The next section is labeled "System" and obviously affects System related areas. This section has five sub sections.

- Scripts - You can choose and run one or all of the maintenance scripts (the Daily, Weekly, or Monthly). As these scripts are typically scheduled to run in the wee hours of the morning, and because most people shut their Macs down for the night, these maintenance scripts don't get run as often as they should. Cocktail makes it easy to run these scripts. Again, this function can be included in the automatic maintenance schedules Cocktail lets you create.
- Spotlight - control certain aspects of Spotlight and to turn on or off indexing on a specific drive.
- Databases - Rebuild the launch services database. The launch service database tells what program to launch when you click on a certain file type. You can also update the Unix "locate" and "whatis" databases. These two databases are useful features of the Unix shell. If you aren't familiar with using them or the Mac OS X terminal program, don't worry, this is really more "Geek" territory ☺
- Startup - control the startup language, mode and delay. Be careful with this one.
- Misc - has some other system related functions such as force empty of the trash on a particular volume and to enable kiosk mode.

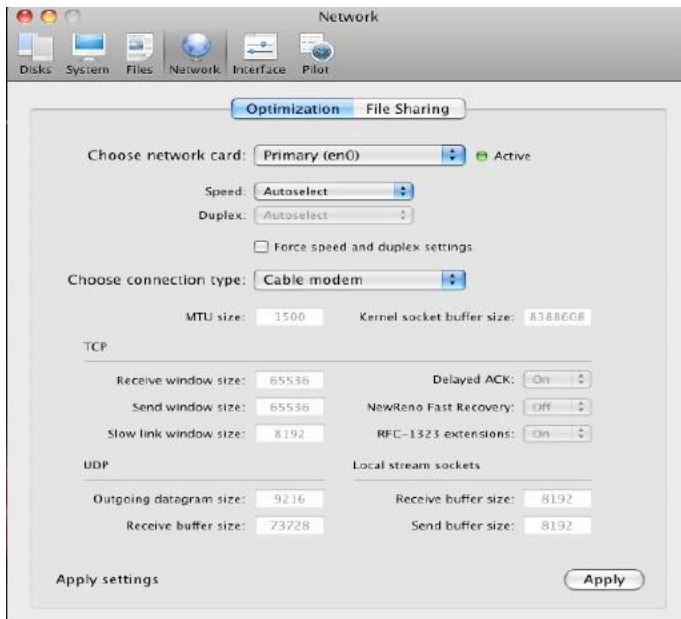
The next section is the Files section. There are seven sub-sections to chose from here.

- Caches - clear a variety of caches used by Mac OS X and basic applications.
- Preferences - this utility searches for corrupt preference files. If it finds one, you can choose to send it to the trash or not. (Remember, trashing preference files is a good first action to resolve a program that is acting up).



- Logs - manage, inspect, and delete system logs of all types.
- DS Store - Delete DS store files from any disk or folder dragged on to Cocktail's function window. As you might know, the DS Store file keeps track of icon positions, folder information, and other GUI information used to present your Mac desktop. Sometimes these files become corrupt and things go crazy.
- Locked - drag a locked file onto this section's function window to delete it. This would be handy when a file's bits get changed to make Mac OS X think it is locked and cannot be deleted. Again, it is important to know what you are doing before you use this feature. You don't want to delete an important file.
- Links - create a symbolic link - A feature that might be useful if you use the Terminal application a lot.
- Misc - other files related features. One feature here is to install an "Archives" preference pane. According to their help file, this gives the user more control of how Mac OS X creates an archive file. However, I could not get this feature to work. Cocktail told me that it could not install the item.

The next major section is Network, offering network related features. There are only two sub sections here, optimization and file sharing.



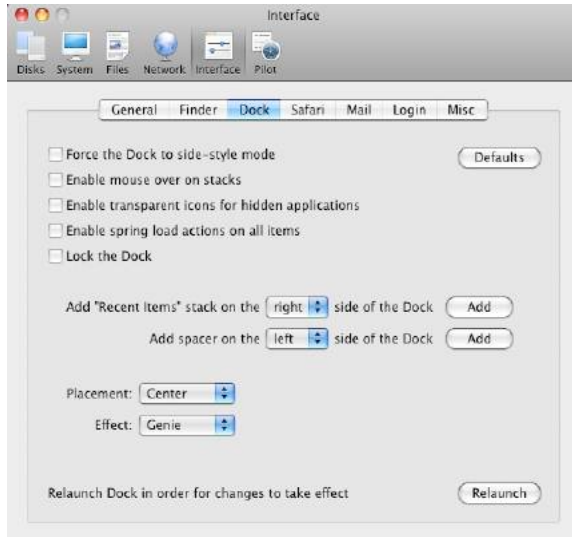
*(Very Geeky stuff!)*

- Optimization - This tab lets you tell your Mac specifically what type of network connection you have so that it can optimize its performance. You can control data speed, type of connection (Cable modem, DSL, FiOS, dial-up, etc. ) When you select a type, the program sets a variety of network protocol values.

It appears that these values should be editable, but the entry boxes were grayed out for me.

- File Sharing - Turn on and off a variety of sharing features. Some of the items that can be turned on minimize security, so be careful if you decide to use them. Most of these features would be for a network administrator use.

The next and final section is Interface. There are a number of sub sections that give the user easy access to changing interface options.

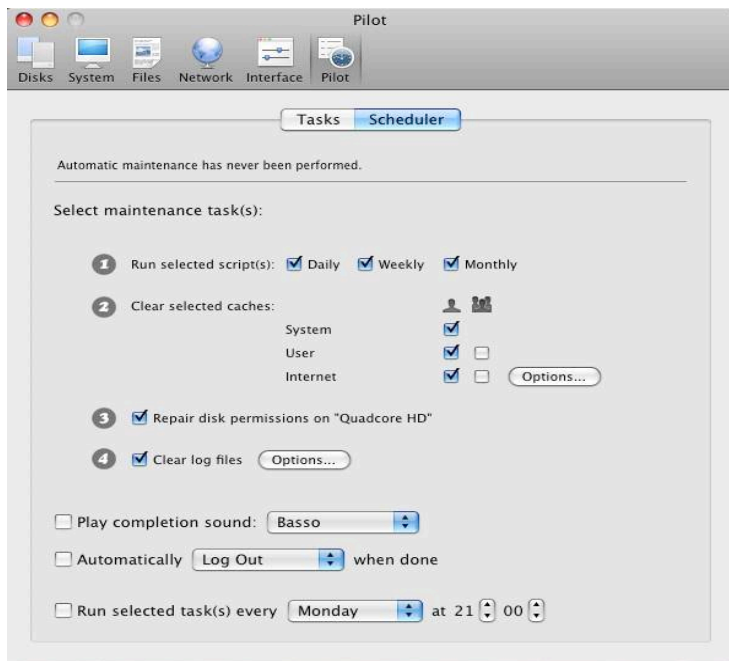


- General - this section provides easy access to various interface features such as recent items, scroll bar control, crash message, and screen shot format.
- Finder - specific interface features of the Finder such as show invisible files, lines of text in icon view, and disable stripes from list view.
- Dock - features related to the Dock. One feature I found quite interesting is the ability to add a “recent items” list to the dock. Now instead of heading all the way up to the top of the Mac desktop, I can access this list from the Dock, where I spend a lot of my mousing time. The feature can be set to show recent documents, applications, servers, favorite volumes, or favorite items. The only bad aspect of this stack is that you are forced into stack view, which shows the icon of the first item in the stack. This was a problem when I selected recent servers, since there were none on the list, the stack became blank!
- Safari - various Safari related features including turning on the debug menu and control of history limits.
- Mail - various Apple Mail application functions including adding various Mail related messages to the console.

- Login - control of the login process
- Misc - Essentially the ability to turn on the debug menu in various Apple related applications As well as some other application specific features.

Whew - what a list! I am not an expert enough to know if any hidden Macintosh related feature wasn't included in that list, but I would be surprised if anything important was.

The final section is the pilot tab, here you get the ability to set up a suite of tests and to run them manually or set up a schedule to run them automatically on a certain time and date.



*(Set up an auto pilot to run the routines)*

Cocktail runs fairly well. With the exception noted above, every function I tried worked to my satisfaction. This program will appeal to the more “geeky” of Mac users, those that make regular use of the various powerful functions found in the Mac’s UNIX under-core. However, Cocktail offers easy access to many functions the average Mac users should be familiar with.

Which leads me to one of my “Soapbox” positions. (Let me plop my box down and stand upon it...)

Computers are very complex machines. Even a basic machine requires regular maintenance. Computers definitely require a bit of regular care. Yes UNIX, that is the core of Mac OS X, does do some basic maintenance. But the people who created these maintenance routines never considered that anyone would turn the machine off at night. Even though Macs are very great computers, they do need a bit of care. A user should regularly run the maintenance routines, clean up permissions, and check the hard drive for issues.

A program like Cocktail is great, since it not only makes it really easy for the user to set up routines to automatically run necessary maintenance routines, but it helps to educate the user as well. Well, if one could get the user to actually inspect the features of this program it would. ☺ .

The biggest problem I found with Cocktail is that it's Pilot feature is very limited. In that I mean: I would like to set up at least two different automatic routines. I would like to run the maintenance scripts and change log files on a weekly basis, and also run the check permissions and clear caches along with these scripts once a month. Another might like to run the daily, daily, the weekly weekly (along with the daily) and the monthly monthly, along with the other two and perhaps permissions. Cocktail's pilot function only allows one automatic set up.

The obvious work around would be to use iCal to remind the user to run which specific test when they are due. But this solution exists for anyone, whether they own Cocktail or not.

### **Conclusion**

Cocktail is a useful program. I would recommend it for anyone who wants to (or is willing to) do a little regular maintenance of their Macintosh and it's OS. It is easy to use, offers a goodly amount of information in its help files, and provides very easy access to otherwise hard to get to maintenance features.

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Besides our website and consulting efforts, we also create *macCompanion* as a freely available PDF-based monthly. It averages about 100 pages per month. July 2006 was the 4th-year anniversary of this labor of love. The *macCompanion* staff is an all-volunteer team of writers and reviewers from many parts of the globe, and they also have a great wealth of knowledge and experience in their backgrounds. That base of talent also continues to keep growing as the Macintosh Professional Network expands.

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